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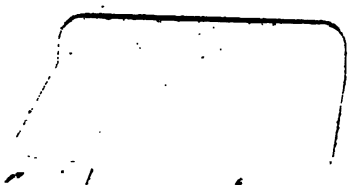

THE

WORKS

OF

ALEXANDER POPE;

WITH

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

JOSEPH WARTON, D.D.

AND OTHERS.

A NEW EDITION,

COMPLETE IN NINE VOLUMES.

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FOR RICHARD PRIESTLEY, HIGH HOLBORN.

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PREFACE

OF THE

PUBLISHER OF THE SURREPTITIOUS EDITION, 1735.

WE presume we want no apology to the reader for this publication, but some may be thought needful to Mr. Pope: *however, he cannot think our offence so great as theirs, who first separately published what we have here but collected in a better form and order. As for the Letters we have procured to be added, they serve but to complete, explain, and sometimes set in a true light, those others, which it was not in the writer's or our power to recall.*

This collection hath been owing to several cabinets: some drawn from thence by accidents, and others (even of those to Ladies) voluntarily given. It is to one of that sex we are beholden for the whole correspondence between H. C. Esq. which Letters being lent her by that Gentleman, she took the liberty to print; as appears by the following, which we shall give at length, both as it is something curious, and as it may serve for an apology for ourselves.

TO HENRY CROMWELL, ESQ.

June 27, 1727.

AFTER so long a silence as the many and great oppressions I have sighed under have occasioned, one is at a loss how to begin a letter to so kind a friend as yourself. But as it was always my resolution, if I must sink, to do it as decently (that is, as silently) as I could; so when I found myself plunged into unforeseen and unavoidable ruin, I retreated from the world, and in a manner buried myself in a dismal place, where I knew none, and none knew me. In this dull unthinking way, I have protracted a lingering death (for life it cannot be called) ever since you saw me, sequestered from company, deprived of my books, and nothing left to converse with, but the letters of my dead or absent friends; among which latter I always placed yours and Mr. Pope's in the first rank. I lent some of them indeed to an ingenious person, who was so delighted with the specimen, that he importuned me for a sight of the rest, which having obtained, he conveyed them to the press, I must not say altogether with my consent, nor wholly without it. I thought them too good to be lost in oblivion, and had no cause to apprehend the disobliging of any. The Public, viz. all persons of taste and judgment, would be pleased with so agreeable an amusement; Mr. Cromwell could not be angry, since it was but justice to his merit, to publish the solemn and private professions of love, gratitude, and veneration, made him by so celebrated an author; and sincerely Mr.

Pope ought not to resent the publication, since the early pregnancy of his genius was no dishonour to his character. And yet, had either of you been asked, common modesty would have obliged you to refuse, what you would not be displeased with, if done without your knowledge. And besides, to end all dispute, you had been pleased to make me a free gift of them, to do what I pleased with them; and every one knows, that the person to whom a letter is addressed, has the same right to dispose of it, as he has of goods purchased with his money. I doubt not but your generosity and honour will do me the right, of owning by a line that I came honestly by them. I flatter myself, in a few months I shall again be visible to the world; and whenever through good providence that turn shall happen, I shall joyfully acquaint you with it, there being none more truly your obliged servant, than, Sir,

Your, etc.

E. THOMAS.

P. S. A Letter, Sir, directed to Mrs. Thomas, to be left at my house, will be safely transmitted to her, by

Yours, etc.

E. CURLL.

MR. CROMWELL TO MR. POPE.

Epsom, July 6, 1727.

WHEN these letters were first printed, I wondered how Curll could come by them, and could not but laugh at the pompous title; since whatever you wrote to me was humour, and familiar raillery. As soon as I came from Epsom, I heard you had been to see me, and I writ you a short letter from Will's, that I longed to see you. Mr. D——s, about that time, charged me with giving them to a mistress, which I positively denied: not in the least, at that time, thinking of it; but some time after, finding in the News-papers Letters from Lady Packington, Lady Chudleigh, and Mr. Norris to the same Sappho, or E. T. I begin to fear that I was guilty. I have never seen these Letters of Curll's, nor would go to his shop about them; I have not seen the Sappho, alias E. T. these seven years.——Her writing, *That I gave her 'em, to do what she would with 'em,* is straining the point too far. I thought not of it, nor do I think she did then; but severe necessity, which catches hold of a twig, has produced all this; which has lain hid, and forgot by me so many years. Curll sent me a letter last week, desiring a positive answer about this matter, but finding I would give him none, he went to E. T. and writ a postscript in her long romantic letter, to direct my answer to his house; but they not expecting an answer, sent a young man to me, whose name, it seems, is Pattison. I told him I should not write any thing, but I believed it might be

so as she writ in her letter. I am extremely concerned that my former indiscretion in putting them into the hands of this *Pretieuse*, should have given you so much disturbance; for the last thing I should do would be to disoblige you, for whom I have ever preserved the greatest esteem, and shall ever be, Sir,

Your faithful Friend, etc.

HENRY CROMWELL.

MR. CROMWELL TO MR. POPE.

August 1, 1727.

THOUGH I writ my long narrative from Epsom, till I was tired, yet I was not satisfied; lest any doubt should rest upon your mind. I could not make protestations of my innocence of a grievous crime; but I was impatient till I came to town, that I might send you those Letters, as a clear evidence that I was a perfect stranger to all their proceeding. Should I have protested against it, after the printing, it might have been taken for an attempt to decry his purchase; and as the little exception you have taken has served him to play his game upon us for these two years, a new incident from me might enable him to play it on for two more.——The great value she expresses for all you write, and her passion for having them, I believe, was what prevailed upon me to let her keep them. By the interval of twelve years at least, from her possession to the time of printing them, 'tis manifest, that I had not the least ground to apprehend

such a design: but as people in great straits bring forth their hoards of old gold and most valued jewels; so Sappho had recourse to her hid treasure of Letters, and played off not only yours to me, but all those to herself (as the lady's last stake) into the press.—As for me, I hope when you shall coolly consider the many thousand instances of our being deluded by the females, since that great original of Adam by Eve, you will have a more favourable thought of the undesigning error of

Your faithful Friend, etc.
HENRY CROMWELL.

Now shall our apology for this publication be as ill received as the lady's seems to have been by the gentlemen concerned; we shall at least have her Comfort, *of being thanked by the rest of the world. Nor has Mr.* P. *himself any great cause to think it much offence to his modesty, or reflection on his judgment, when we take care to inform the public, that there are few Letters of his in this collection, which were not written under twenty years of age: on the other hand, we doubt not the reader will be much more surprized to find, at that early period, so much variety of style, affecting sentiment, and justness of criticism, in pieces which must have been writ in haste, very few perhaps ever reviewed, and none intended for the eye of the public.*

A

CATALOGUE

OF THE

SURREPTITIOUS AND INCORRECT EDITIONS

OF

MR. POPE'S LETTERS.

I. FAMILIAR Letters to Henry Cromwell, Esq. by Mr. Pope, 12mo. Printed for Edmund Curl, 1727.

[In this are *Verses*, etc. ascribed to Mr. P. which were *not his*.]

II. Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence for Thirty Years: from 1704 to 1734. Being a Collection of Letters which passed between him and several eminent Persons. Printed for E. Curl, 8vo. 1735. Two editions.

——— The same in duodecimo, with cuts. The third edition.

[These contain several Letters *not genuine*.]

III. Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, Vol. II. Printed for the Same, 8vo. 1735. [In this volume are *no* Letters of Mr. Pope's, but a few of those to Mr. Cromwell *reprinted:* nor any to him, but one said to be Bishop Atterbury's, and another in that Bishop's name, certainly not his: One or two Letters from St. Omer's, advertised of Mr. Pope, but which proved to be only *concerning* him; some scandalous Reflections of one Le Neve on the Legislature, Courts of Justice, and Church of England, pag. 116, 117. and the Divinity of Christ expressly denied in page 123, 124. With some scandalous Anecdotes and a Narrative.]

——— The same in duodecimo.

IV. Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, Vol. III. Printed for E. Curl, 8vo. 1735. [In this is *only one Letter* by Mr. Pope to the Dutchess of Buckingham, which the publisher some way procured and printed against her order. It also contains four Letters, intitled, Mr. Pope's to Miss Blount, which are literally taken from an old translation of Voiture's to Mad. Rambouillet.]

——— The same in duodecimo.

V. Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, Vol. IV. Printed by the same, contains *not one Letter* of this Author.

——— The same in duodecimo.

VI. Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence, Vol. V. containing *only one* Letter of Mr. P. and another of the Lord B. with a scandalous Preface of Curl's how he could come at more of their Letters, 8vo. printed for the same, 1736.

VII. Letters of Mr. Pope and several eminent Persons, Vol. I. from 1705 to 1711. Printed and sold by the booksellers of London and Westminster, 8vo. 1735.

——— The same Vol. II. from 1711, etc. Printed and sold by the booksellers of London and Westminster, 8vo. 1735.—— The same in 12mo. with a Narrative.

VIII. Letters of Mr. Pope and several eminent Persons. From 1705 to 1735. Printed and sold by the booksellers of London and Westminster, 12mo. 1735.

[This edition is said in the title to contain *more Letters* than any other, but contains only *Two*, said to be the Bishop of Rochester's, and printed before by Curl.]

IX. Letters of Mr. Pope and several eminent Persons, from the year 1705 to 1735, Vol. I. and Vol. II. Printed for T. Cooper, at the Globe in Paternoster-Row, 1735, 12mo.

[In this was inserted the *Forged Letter* from the Bishop of Rochester, and some other things, unknown to Mr. Pope.]

PREFACE

PREFIXED TO THE

FIRST GENUINE EDITION IN QUARTO,

1737.

If what is here offered to the reader, should happen in any degree to please him, the thanks are not due to the author, but partly to his friends, and partly to his enemies; it was wholly owing to the affection of the former, that so many Letters, of which he never kept copies, were preserved; and to the malice of the latter, that they were produced in this manner.

He had been very disagreeably used, in the publication of some letters written in his youth, which fell into the hands of a woman who printed them, without his, or his correspondent's consent, in 1727. This treatment, and the apprehension of more of the same kind, put him upon recalling as many as he could from those who he imagined had kept any. He was sorry to find the number so great, but immediately lessened it by burning three parts in four of them: the rest he spared, not in any preference of their style or writing, but merely as they preserved the memory of some friendships which will ever be dear to him,

or set in a true light some matters of fact, from which the scribblers of the times had taken occasion to asperse either his friends or himself. He therefore laid by the Originals, together with those of his correspondents, and caused a copy to be taken to deposit in the library of a noble friend: that in case either of the revival of slanders, or the publication of surreptitious Letters, during his life or after, a proper use might be made of them.

The next year, the posthumous works of Mr. Wycherley were printed, in a way disreputable enough to his memory. It was thought a justice due to him, to shew the world his better judgment: and that it was his last resolution to have suppressed those poems. As some of the letters which had passed between him and our author cleared that point, they were published in 1729, with a few marginal notes added by a friend.

If in these Letters, and in those which were printed without his consent, there appear too much of a juvenile ambition of wit, or affectation of gaiety, he may reasonably hope it will be considered to *whom*, and at *what age*, he was guilty of it, as well as how soon it was over. The rest, every judge of writing will see, were by no means efforts of the genius, but emanations of the heart; and this alone may induce any candid reader to believe their publication an act of necessity, rather than of vanity.

It is notorious, how many volumes have been published under the title of his correspondence, with promises still of more, and open and repeated offers of encouragement to all persons who should send any letters of his for the press. It is as notorious what

methods were taken to procure them, even from the publisher's own accounts in his prefaces, viz. by transacting with people in necessities[1], or of abandoned [2]characters, or such as dealt without names in the [3]dark. Upon a quarrel with one of these last, he betrayed himself so far, as to appeal to the public in Narratives and Advertisements: like that Irish highwayman a few years before, who preferred a bill against his companion, for not sharing equally in the money, rings, and watches, they had traded for in partnership upon Hounslow-heath.

Several have been printed in his name which he never writ, and addressed to persons to whom they never were written[4]: counterfeited as from Bishop Atterbury to him, which neither that bishop nor he ever saw[5]; and advertised even after that period when it was made felony to correspond with him.

I know not how it has been this author's fate, whom both his situation and his temper have all his life excluded from rivalling any man, in any pretension, (except that of pleasing by poetry,) to have been as much aspersed and written at, as any First Minister of his time: pamphlets and news-papers have been full of him, nor was it *there only* that a private man,

[1] See the Preface to Vol. I. of a Book called Mr. Pope's Literary Correspondence.

[2] Postscript to the Preface to Vol. IV.

[3] Narrative and Anecdotes before Vol. II.

[4] In Vol. III. Letters from Mr. Pope to Mrs. Blount, etc.

[5] Vol. II. of the same, 8vo. p. 20, and at the end of the Edition of his Letters in 12mo. by the booksellers of London and Westminster; and of the last Edition in 12mo. printed for T. Cooper, 1725.

who never troubled either the world or common conversation with his opinions of Religion or Government, has been represented as a dangerous member of Society, a bigoted Papist, and an enemy to the establishment. The unwarrantable publication of his letters hath at least done him this service, to shew he has constantly enjoyed the friendship of worthy men; and that if a catalogue were to be taken of his friends and his enemies, he needs not to blush at either. Many of them having been written on the most trying occurrences, and all in the openness of friendship, are a proof what were his real sentiments, as they flowed warm from the heart, and fresh from the occasion; without the least thought that ever the world should be witness to them. Had he sate down with a design to draw his own picture, he could not have done it so truly; for whoever sits for it (whether to himself or another) will inevitably find the features more composed, than his appear in these letters. But if an author's hand, like a painter's, be more distinguishable in a slight sketch than in a finished picture, this very carelessness will make them the better known from such counterfeits, as have been, and may be imputed to him, either through a mercenary or malicious design.

We hope it is needless to say, he is not accountable for several passages in the surreptitious editions of those Letters, which are such as no man of common sense would have published himself. The errors of the press were almost innumerable, and could not but be extremely multiplied in so many repeated editions, by the avarice and negligence of piratical printers, to

not one of whom he ever gave the least Title, or any other encouragement than that of not prosecuting them.

For the *Chasms* in the correspondence, we had not the means to supply them, the author having destroyed too many Letters to preserve any Series. Nor would he go about to amend them, except by the omissions of some passages, improper, or at least impertinent, to be divulged to the public: or of such entire Letters, as were either not his, or not approved of by him.

He has been very sparing of those of his friends, and thought it a respect shewn to their memory, to suppress in particular such as were most in his favour. As it is not to *Vanity* but to *Friendship* that he intends this Monument, he would save his enemies the mortification of shewing any farther how well their Betters have thought of him: and at the same time secure from their censure his living friends, who (he promises them) shall never be put to the blush, this way at least, for their partiality to him.

But however this collection may be received, we cannot but lament the *Cause*, and the *Necessity* of such a publication, and heartily wish no honest man may be reduced to the same. To state the case fairly in the present situation. A bookseller advertises his intention to publish your Letters: he openly promises encouragement, or even pecuniary rewards, to those who will help him to any; and engages to insert whatever they shall send. Any scandal is sure of a reception, and any enemy who sends it screened from a discovery. Any domestic or servant, who can snatch

a letter from your pocket or cabinet, is encouraged to that vile practice. If the quantity falls short of a volume, any thing else shall be joined with it (more especially scandal) which the collector can think for his interest, all recommended under your Name: you have not only Theft to fear, but Forgery. Any Bookseller, though conscious in what manner they were obtained, not caring what may be the consequence to your Fame or Quiet, will sell and disperse them in town and country. The better your Reputation is, the more your name will cause them to be demanded, and consequently the more you will be injured. The injury is of such a nature, as the Law (which does not punish for *Intentions)* cannot prevent; and when done, may punish, but not redress. You are therefore reduced, either to enter into a personal treaty with such a man (which though the readiest, is the meanest of all methods), or to take such other measures to suppress them, as are contrary to your Inclination, or to publish them, as are contrary to your Modesty. Otherwise your Fame and your Property suffer alike; you are at once exposed and plundered. As an *Author*, you are deprived of that Power, which above all others constitutes a good one, the power of rejecting, and the right of judging for yourself, what pieces it may be most useful, entertaining, or reputable, to publish, at the time and in the manner you think best. As a *Man*, you are deprived of the right even over your own Sentiments, of the privilege of every human creature to divulge or conceal them; of the advantage of your second thoughts; and of all the benefit of your Prudence, your Can-

dour, or your Modesty. As a *Member of Society*, you are yet more injured; your private conduct, your domestic concerns, your family secrets, your passions, your tendernesses, your weaknesses, are exposed to the Misconstruction or Resentment of some, to the Censure or Impertinence of the whole world. The printing private letters in such a manner, is the worst sort of *betraying Conversation*, as it has evidently the most extensive, and the most lasting, ill consequences. It is the highest Offence against *Society*, as it renders the most dear and intimate intercourse of friend with friend, and the most necessary commerce of man with man, unsafe, and to be dreaded. To open letters is esteemed the greatest breach of honour: even to look into them already opened or accidentally dropt, is held an ungenerous, if not an immoral act. What then can be thought of procuring them merely by fraud, and the printing them merely for lucre? We cannot but conclude every honest man will wish, that, if the Laws have as yet provided no adequate remedy, one at least may be found, to prevent so great and growing an evil.

LETTERS

OF

MR. POPE,

AND

SEVERAL OF HIS FRIENDS.

Quo Desiderio veteres revocamus Amores,
Atque olim amissas flemus Amicitias!—Catull.

In the Bodleian Library, among Rawlinson's books and papers, is a large Quarto of these Letters, the original copies, with the post-mark on most of them, which Mrs. Thomas delivered to Curl, and which Rawlinson procured from Curl. On a comparison, which has been carefully made, it appears that Curl has omitted some, mutilated others, and blended two together.

With respect to this Collection of Letters, it may be observed in general, that those are best which are written by the persons that have been most conversant in the world, and knew most of life. Those of our Author seem evidently designed for the public eye, and are sometimes inconsistent with the facility and unreservedness that ought to take place, and be predominant in a friendly and familiar correspondence. Of which kind the Letters of three celebrated Ladies, Madame de Sevigné, Madame Maintenon, and Lady Mary Wortley Montague, are masterpieces. So indeed is the correspondence betwixt Boileau and Racine, published by his son. But beyond all comparison, the *eighteen* volumes of the Letters of Voltaire, published in the last edition of his Works, contain a variety of literary history and criticism, written also to the most celebrated persons of the age, hardly to be equalled or excelled. It is much to be lamented that Sprat did not publish a large collection of his friend Cowley's Letters, which he had in his possession, especially, as he himself says, "it was a way of writing in which Cowley particularly excelled, as in these he always expressed the native tenderness and innocent gaiety of his heart." By the truly valuable collection given us by Mr. Mason, it appears that Gray was a much better writer of Letters than Pope.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

MR. WYCHERLEY[1],

From the Year 1704 to 1710.

LETTER I.

Binfield in Windsor Forest, Dec. 26, 1704[2].

It was certainly a great satisfaction to me to see and converse with a Man, whom in his writings I had so long known with pleasure; but it was a high addition to it, to hear you, at our very first meeting,

[1] If one were to judge of this set of Letters by the manner of thinking and turn of expression, one should conclude they had been all mis-titled; and that the letters given to the boy of sixteen, were written by the man of seventy, and so on the contrary; such sober sense, such gravity of manners, and so much judgment and knowledge of composition, enlivened with the sprightliness of manly wit, distinguish those of Mr. Pope: while, on the other hand, a childish jealousy, a puerile affectation, an attention and lying at catch for *turns* and *points*, together with a total ignorance and contempt of order, of method, and of all relation of the parts to one another to compose a reasonable whole, make up the character of those of Mr. Wycherley. However, those ingredients in the characters of the two distant ages of life, which Cicero makes Cato so much commend, "Adolescens in quo Senile aliquid, Senex in quo est Adolescens aliquid," seem to have been the cement of their friendship. W.

[2] The author's age then sixteen. P.

doing justice to your dead friend Mr. Dryden. I was not so happy as to know him: *Virgilium tantum vidi*[2]. Had I been born early enough, I must have known and loved him: For I have been assured, not only by yourself, but by Mr. Congreve and Sir William Trumbul, that his personal Qualities were as amiable as his poetical, notwithstanding the many libellous misrepresentations of them, against which the former of these Gentlemen has told me he will one day vindicate him[3]. I suppose those injuries were begun by the violence of Party, but 'tis no doubt they were continued by envy at his success and fame[4]: And those Scriblers who attacked him in his latter times, were only like gnats in a summer evening, which are never very troublesome but in the finest and most glorious season; for his fire, like the sun's, shined clearest towards its setting.

You must not therefore imagine, that when you told me my own performances were above those Critics, I was so vain as to believe it; and yet I may not be so humble as to think myself quite below their notice. For critics, as they are birds of prey, have ever a natural inclination to carrion: and though such poor writers as I are but beggars, no beggar is

[2] When a very young Boy, he prevailed with a friend to carry him to a Coffee-house which Dryden frequented; where he had the satisfaction he here speaks of. W.

[3] He since did so, in his dedication to the Duke of Newcastle, prefixed to the duodecimo Edition of Dryden's Plays, 1727. P.

[4] The fact seems to have been just the reverse. One of the first Satires against him was the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal*; and one of the last, Montague's parody of his *Hind and Panther*. W.

so poor but he can keep a cur, and no author so beggarly but he can keep a critic. I am far from thinking the attacks of such people either any honour or dishonour even to me, much less to Mr. Dryden. I agree with you that whatever lesser Wits have risen since his death, are but like stars appearing when the sun is set, that twinkle only in his absence, and with the rays they have borrowed from him. Our wit (as you call it) is but reflection or imitation, therefore scarce to be called ours. True Wit, I believe, may be defined a justness of thought, and a facility of expression; or (in the midwife's phrase) a perfect conception, with an easy delivery[5]. However, this is far from a complete definition; pray help me to a better[6], as I doubt not you can.

I am, etc.

LETTER II.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Jan. 25, 1704-5.

I HAVE been so busy of late in correcting and transcribing some of my madrigals for a great man or two who desire to see them, that I have (with your pardon) omitted to return you an answer to your

[5] This is no definition of wit at all, but of good writing in general. W.

[6] Mr. Locke had given a better. But his Essay was not to our young poet's taste. He had met with it early; but he used to say, he had then no relish for it. W.

most ingenious letter: so scriblers to the public, like bankers to the public, are profuse in their voluntary loans to it, whilst they forget to pay their more private and particular, as more just debts, to the best and nearest friends. However, I hope you, who have as much good-nature as good sense (since they generally are companions[7],) will have patience with a debtor who has an inclination to pay you his obligations, if he had wherewithal ready about him; and in the mean time should consider, when you have obliged me beyond my present power of returning the favour, that a debtor may be an honest man, if he but intends to be just when he is able, though late. But I should be less just to you, the more I thought I could make a return to so much profuseness of Wit and humanity together; which, though they seldom accompany each other in other men, are in you so equally met, I know not in which you most abound. But so much for my opinion of you, which is, that your Wit and Ingenuity is equalled by nothing but your Judgment or Modesty, which (though it be to please myself) I must no more offend than I can do either right.

Therefore I will say no more now of them, than that your good wit never forfeited your good judgment, but in your partiality to me and mine; so that if it were possible for a hardened scribler to be

[7] *Good-nature and good sense,* it seems, *generally are companions,* yet under the different names *of wit and humanity they seldom accompany each other.* But they might keep company or not, just as they pleased, for the Writer was gone in search of Witticisms. W.

vainer than he is, what you write of me would make me more conceited than what I scribble myself: yet, I must confess, I ought to be more humbled by your praise than exalted, which commends my little sense with so much more of yours, that I am disparaged and disheartened by your commendations; who give me an example of your wit in the first part of your letter, and a definition of it in the last; to make writing well (that is, like you) more difficult to me than ever it was before. Thus the more great and just your example and definition of Wit are, the less I am capable to follow them. Then the best was of shewing my Judgment, after having seen how you write, is to leave off writing; and the best way to shew my friendship to you, is to put an end to your trouble, and to conclude Yours, etc.

LETTER III.

March 25, 1705.

When I write to you, I foresee a long letter, and ought to beg your patience before-hand; for if it proves the longest, it will be of course the worst I have troubled you with. Yet to express my gratitude at large for your obliging letter, is not more my duty than my interest; as some people will abundantly thank you for one piece of kindness, to put you in mind of bestowing another. The more favourable you are to me, the more distinctly I see my faults: Spots and blemishes, you know, are never

so plainly discovered as in the brightest sunshine. Thus I am mortified by those commendations which were designed to encourage me: for praise to a young wit, is like rain to a tender flower[8]; if it be moderately bestowed, it chears and revives; but if too lavishly, over-charges and depresses him. Most men in years, as they are generally discouragers of youth, are like old trees, that, being past bearing themselves, will suffer no young plants to flourish beneath them: but, as if it were not enough to have outdone all your coevals in wit, you will excel them in good-nature too. As for[9] my green essays, if you find any pleasure in them, it must be such as a man naturally takes in observing the first shoots and buddings of a tree which he has raised himself; and 'tis impossible they should be esteemed any otherwise, than as we value fruits for being early, which nevertheless are the most insipid, and the worst of the year. In a word, I must blame you for treating me with so much compliment, which is at best but the smoke of friendship. I neither write nor converse with you, to gain your praise, but your affection. Be so much my friend as to appear my enemy, and tell me my faults, if not as a young man, at least as an unexperienced Writer. I am, &c.

[8] The perpetual attempt to be witty and brilliant; the accumulation of simile upon simile; the *point*, the *antithesis*, the cant of satire, and severity on authors, and critics, and women, are sufficiently disgusting in the Letters of this vain old man.

[9] His Pastorals, written at sixteen years of age. P.

LETTER IV.

TO MR. WYCHERLEY.

March 29, 1705.

YOUR letter of the twenty-fifth of March I have received, which was more welcome to me than any thing could be out of the country, though it were one's rent due that day; and I can find no fault with it, but that it charges me with want of sincerity, or justice, for giving you your due; who should not let your modesty be so unjust to your merit, as to reject what is due to it, and call that compliment, which is so short of your desert, that it is rather degrading than exalting you. But if compliment be the smoke only of friendship, (as you say,) however, you must allow there is no smoke but there is some fire; and as the sacrifice of incense offered to the Gods would not have been half so sweet to others, if it had not been for its smoke; so friendship, like love, cannot be without some incense, to perfume the name it would praise and immortalize. But since you say you do not write to me to gain my praise, but my affection, pray how is it possible to have the one without the other? we must admire before we love. You affirm, you would have me so much your friend as to appear your enemy, and find out your faults rather than your perfections; but (my friend) that would be so hard to do, that I, who love no difficulties, can't be persuaded to it. Besides, the vanity of a scribler is such, that he will never part with his

own judgment to gratify another's; especially when he must take pains to do it: and though I am proud to be of your opinion, when you talk of thing or man but yourself, I cannot suffer you to murder your fame with your own hand, without opposing you; especially when you say your last letter is the worst (since the longest) you have favoured me with; which I therefore think the best: as the longest life (if a good one) is the best; as it yields the more variety, and is the more exemplary; as a chearful summer's day, though longer than a dull one in the winter, is less tedious and more entertaining. Therefore let but your friendship be like your letter, as lasting as it is agreeable, and it can never be tedious, but more acceptable and obliging to

Your, etc.

LETTER V.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

April 7, 1705.

I HAVE received your's of the fifth, wherein your modesty refuses the just praises I give you, by which you lay claim to more, as a bishop gains his bishopric by saying he will not episcopate: but I must confess, whilst I displease you by commending you, I please myself; just as incense is sweeter to the offerer than the deity to whom 'tis offered, by his being so much above it: For indeed every man par-

takes of the praise he gives, when it is so justly given.

As to my enquiry after your intrigues with the Muses, you may allow me to make it, since no old man can give so young, so great, and able a favourite of theirs, jealousy. I am, in my enquiry, like old Sir Bernard Gascoign, who used to say, that when he was grown too old to have his visits admitted alone by the ladies, he always took along with him a young man to ensure his welcome to them: for had he come alone he had been rejected, only because his visits were not scandalous to them. So I am (like an old rook, who is ruined by gaming) forced to live on the good fortune of the Pushing young men, whose fancies are so vigorous that they ensure their success in their adventures with the Muses, by their strength of imagination.

Your papers are safe in my custody (you may be sure) from any one's theft but my own: for 'tis as dangerous to trust a scribler with your wit, as a gamester with the custody of your money.—If you happen to come to town, you will make it more difficult for me to leave it, who am Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

April 30, 1705.

I CANNOT contend with you: You must give me leave at once to wave all your compliments, and to collect only this in general from them, that your de-

sign is to encourage me. But I separate from all the rest that paragraph or two, in which you make me so warm an offer of your friendship. Were I possessed of that, it would put an end to all those speeches with which you now make me blush; and change them to wholesome advices, and free sentiments, which might make me wiser and happier. I know 'tis the general opinion, that friendship is best contracted betwixt persons of equal age; but I have so much interest to be of another mind, that you must pardon me if I cannot forbear telling you a few notions of mine in opposition to that opinion.

In the first place 'tis observable, that the love we bear to our friends, is generally caused by our finding the same dispositions in them, which we feel in ourselves. This is but self-love at the bottom: whereas the affection betwixt people of different ages cannot well be so, the inclinations of such being commonly various. The friendship of two young men is often occasioned by love of pleasure or voluptuousness, each being desirous, for his own sake, of one to assist or encourage him in the courses he pursues; as that of two old men is frequently on the score of some profit, lucre, or design upon others. Now, as a young man, who is less acquainted with the ways of the world, has in all probability less of interest; and an old man, who may be weary of himself, has, or should have less of self-love; so the friendship between them is the more likely to be true, and unmixed with too much self-regard. One may add to this, that such a friendship is of greater use and advantage to both; for the old man will grow

gay and agreeable to please the young one; and the young man more discreet and prudent by the help of the old one: so it may prove a cure of those epidemical diseases of age and youth, sourness and madness. I hope you will not need many arguments to convince you of the possibility of this; one alone abundantly satisfies me and convinces to the heart, which is, that[1] young as I am, and old as you are, I am your entirely affectionate, etc.

LETTER VII.

June 23, 1705.

I SHOULD believe myself happy in your good opinion, but that you treat me so much in a style of compliment. It hath been observed of women, that they are more subject in their youth to be touched with vanity, than men, on account of their being generally treated this way; but the weakest women are not more weak than that class of men, who are thought to pique themselves upon their Wit. The world is never wanting, when a coxcomb is accomplishing himself, to help to give him the finishing stroke.

Every man is apt to think his neighbour overstocked with vanity, yet I cannot but fancy there are certain times, when most people are in a disposition of being informed; and 'tis incredible what a vast

[1] Mr. Wycherley was at this time about seventy years old, Mr. Pope under seventeen.

good a little truth might do, spoken in such seasons. A small alms will do a great kindness to people in extreme necessity.

I could name an acquaintance of yours, who would at this time think himself more obliged to you for the information of his faults, than the confirmation of his follies. If you would make those the subject of a letter, it might be as long as I could wish your letters always were.

I do not wonder you have hitherto found some difficulty (as you are pleased to say) in writing to me, since you have always chosen the task of commending me: take but the other way, and, I dare engage, you will find none at all.

As for my verses, which you praise so much, I may truly say they have never been the cause of any vanity in me, except what they gave me when they first occasioned my acquaintance with you. But I have several times since been in danger of this vice; as often, I mean, as I received any letters from you. 'Tis certain, the greatest magnifying glasses in the world are a man's own eyes, when they look upon his own person; yet even in those, I cannot fancy myself so extremely like Alexander the Great, as you would persuade me. If I must be like him, 'tis you will make me so, by complimenting me into a better opinion of myself than I deserve: They made him think he was the son of Jupiter, and you assure me I am a man of parts. But is this all you can say to my honour? you said ten times as much before, when you call'd me your friend. After having made me believe I possess'd a share in your affection, to

treat me with compliments and sweet sayings, is like the proceeding with poor Sancho Pancho: they persuaded him, that he enjoyed a great dominion, and then gave him nothing to subsist upon but wafers and marmalade. In our days the greatest obligations you can lay upon a Wit, is to make a fool of him. For as when madmen are found incurable, wise men give them their way, and please them as well as they can; so when those incorrigible things, Poets, are once irrecoverably be-mus'd, the best way both to quiet them, and secure yourself from the effects of their frenzy, is to feed their vanity; which indeed, for the most part, is all that is fed in a Poet.

You may believe me, I could be heartily glad that all you say were as true, applied to me, as it would be to yourself, for several weighty reasons; but for none so much as that I might be to you what you deserve; whereas I can now be no more than is consistent with the small though utmost capacity of, etc.

LETTER VIII.

Oct. 26, 1705.

I HAVE now changed[2] the scene from the town to the country; from Will's coffee-house to Windsor Forest. I find no other difference than this, betwixt the common town-wits, and the downright country-

[2] In this Letter he has excelled Wycherley in his own way of striving to be always witty and satirical.

fools, that the first are pertly in the wrong, with a little more flourish and gaiety; and the last neither in the right nor the wrong, but confirmed in a stupid settled medium betwixt both. However, methinks, these are most in the right who quietly and easily resign themselves over to the gentle reign of dulness, which the Wits must do at last, though after a great deal of noise and resistance. Ours are a sort of modest inoffensive people, who neither have sense nor pretend to any, but enjoy a jovial sort of dulness: They are commonly known in the world by the name of honest, civil gentlemen: They live much as they ride, at random; a kind of hunting life, pursuing with earnestness and hazard something not worth the catching; never in the way, nor out of it. I can't but prefer solitude to the company of all these; for though a man's self may possibly be the worst fellow to converse with in the world, yet one would think the company of a person whom we have the greatest regard to and affection for, could not be very unpleasant. As a man in love with a mistress, desires no conversation but hers, so a man in love with himself (as most men are) may be best pleased with his own. Besides, if the truest and most useful knowledge be the knowledge of ourselves, solitude conducing most to make us look into ourselves, should be the most instructive state of life.

We see nothing more commonly than men, who for the sake of the circumstantial part and mere outside of life, have been half their days rambling out of their nature, and ought to be sent into solitude to study themselves over again. People are usually

spoiled, instead of being taught, at their coming into the world; whereas, by being more conversant with Obscurity, without any pains, they would naturally follow what they were meant for. In a word, if a man be a coxcomb, Solitude is his best School; and if he be a fool, it is his best Sanctuary.

These are good reasons for my own stay here, but I wish I could give you any for your coming hither, except that I earnestly invite you. And yet I can't help saying I have suffered a great deal of discontent that you do not come, though I so little merit that you should.

I must complain of the shortness of your last. Those who have most wit, like those who have most money, are generally most sparing of either.

LETTER IX.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Nov. 5, 1705.

Yours of the 26th of October I have received, as I have always done yours, with no little satisfaction, and am proud to discover by it, that you find fault with the shortness of mine, which I think the best excuse for it: And though they (as you say) who have most wit or money are most sparing of either; there are some who appear poor to be thought rich, and are poor, which is my case. I cannot but rejoice that you have undergone so much discontent for want of

my company: But if you have a mind to punish me for my fault (which I could not help), defer your coming to town, and you will do it effectually. But I know your charity always exceeds your revenge, so that I will not despair of seeing you, and, in return to your inviting me to your forest, invite you to my forest, the town: where the beasts that inhabit, tame or wild, of long ears or horns, pursue one another either out of love or hatred. You may have the pleasure to see one pack of blood-hounds pursue another herd of brutes, to bring each other to their fall, which is their whole sport: Or if you affect a less bloody chace, you may see a pack of spaniels, called lovers, in a hot pursuit of a two-legged vixen, who only flies the whole loud pack to be singled out by one dog, who runs mute to catch her up the sooner from the rest, as they are making a noise to the loss of their game. In fine, this is the time for all sorts of sport in the town, when those of the country cease; therefore leave your forests of beasts for ours of brutes, called men, who now in full cry, (packed by the court or country,) run down in the house of commons a deserted horned beast of the Court, to the satisfaction of their spectators: Besides, (more for your diversion) you may see not only the two great play-houses of the nation, those of the lords and commons, in dispute with one another; but the two other play-houses in high contest, because the members of one house are removed up to t'other, as it is often done by the court for reasons of state. Insomuch that the lower houses, I mean the play-houses, are going to act tragedies on

one another without doors, and the Sovereign is put to it (as it often happens in the other two houses) to silence one or both, to keep peace beween them. Now I have told you all the news of the town.

I am, etc.

LETTER X.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Feb. 5, 1705-6.

I HAVE received your kind letter, with my paper[3] to Mr. Dryden corrected. I own you have made more of it by making it less, as the Dutch are said to burn half[4] the spices they bring home, to inhance the price of the remainder, so to be greater gainers by their loss (which is indeed my case now). You have pruned my fading laurels of some superfluous, sapless, and dead branches, to make the remainder live the longer; thus, like your master Apollo, you are at once a poet and a physician.

Now, Sir, as to my impudent invitation of you to the town, your good nature was the first cause of my confident request; but excuse me, I must (I see) say no more upon this subject, since I find you a little too nice to be dealt freely with; though you

[3] The same which was printed in the year 1717, in a miscellany of Bern. Lintot's, and in the posthumous works of Mr. Wycherley. W.

[4] Why not be contented with this first happy allusion, but immediately add another?

have given me some encouragement to hope, our friendship might be without shyness, or criminal modesty; for a friend, like a mistress, though he is not to be mercenary, to be true, yet ought not to refuse a friend's kindness because it is small or trivial: I have told you (I think) what a Spanish Lady said to her poor poetical gallant, that a Queen, if she had to do with a groom, would expect a mark of his kindness from him, though it were but his curry-comb. But you and I will dispute this matter when I am so happy as to see you here; and perhaps it is the only dispute in which I might hope to have the better of you.

Now, Sir, to make you another excuse for my boldness in inviting you to town, I designed to leave with you some more of my papers (since these return so much better out of your hands than they went from mine); for I intended (as I told you formerly) to spend a month or six weeks this summer, near you in the country. You may be assured there is nothing I desire so much, as an improvement of your friendship.

LETTER XI.

April 10, 1706.

By one of yours of the last month, you desire me to select, if possible, some things from the[5] first volume of your Miscellanies, which may be altered so

[5] Printed in folio, in the year 1704. P.

as to appear again. I doubted your meaning in this; whether it was to pick out the best of those verses, (as those on the Idleness of business, on Ignorance, on Laziness, etc.) to make the method and numbers exact, and avoid repetitions? For though (upon reading them upon this occasion) I believe, they might receive such an alteration with advantage; yet they would not be changed so much, but any one would know them for the same at first sight. Or if you mean to improve the worst pieces? which are such, as, to render them very good, would require great addition, and almost the entire new writing of them. Or lastly, if you mean the middle sort, as the Songs and Love-verses? For these will need only to be shortened, to omit repetition; the words remaining very little different from what they were before. Pray let me know your mind in this, for I am utterly at a loss. Yet I have tried what I could do to some of the songs, and the poems on Laziness, and Ignorance, but can't (even in my own partial judgment) think my alterations much to the purpose. So that I must needs desire you would apply your care wholly at present to those which are yet unpublished, of which there are more than enough to make a considerable volume, of full as good ones, nay, I believe, of better than any in Vol. I. which I could wish you would defer, at least till you have finished these that are yet unprinted.

I send you a sample of some few of these; namely, the verses to Mr. Waller in his old age; your new ones on the Duke of Marlborough, and two others. I have done all that I thought could be of advantage

to them: Some I have contracted, as we do sunbeams, to improve their energy and force; some I have taken quite away, as we take branches from a tree, to add to the fruit; others I have entirely new expressed, and turned more into poetry. Donne (like one of his successors) had infinitely more wit than he wanted versification; for the great dealers of wit, like those in trade, take least pains to set off their goods; while the haberdashers of small wit spare for no decorations or ornaments. You have commissioned me to paint your shop, and I have done my best to brush you up like your neighbours[6]. But I can no more pretend to the merit of the production, than a midwife to the virtues and good qualities of the child she helps into the light.

The few things I have entirely added, you will excuse; you may take them lawfully for your own, because they are no more than sparks lighted up by your fire: and you may omit them at last, if you think them but squibs in your triumphs.

I am, etc.

[6] Several of Mr. Pope's lines, very easy to be distinguished, may be found in the Posthumous Editions of Wycherley's Poems; particularly those *on Solitude*, *on the Public*, and *on the Mixed Life*. W.

LETTER XII.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Nov. 11, 1707.

I RECEIVED yours of the 9th yesterday, which has (like the rest of your letters) at once pleased and instructed me; so that I assure you, you can no more write too much to your absent friends, than speak too much to the present. This is a truth that all men own, who have either seen your writings, or heard your discourse; enough to make others shew their judgment, in ceasing to write or talk, especially to you, or in your company. However, I speak or write to you, not to please you, but myself; since I provoke your answers; which, whilst they humble me, give me vanity; though I am lessened by you, even when you commend me; since you commend my little sense with so much more of yours, that you put me out of countenance, whilst you would keep me in it. So that you have found a way (against the custom of great wits) to shew even a great deal of good-nature with a great deal of good sense.

I thank you for the book you promised me, by which I find you would not only correct my lines, but my life.

As to the damned verses I intrusted you with, I hope you will let them undergo your purgatory, to save them from other people's damning them: since the critics, who are generally the first damned in this life, like the damned below, never leave to bring

those above them under their own circumstances. I beg you to peruse my papers, and select what you think best or most tolerable, and look over them again; for I resolve suddenly to print some of them, as a hardened old gamester will (in spite of all former ill usage by fortune) push on an ill hand in expectation of recovering himself; especially since I have such a *Croupier* or Second to stand by me as Mr. Pope.

LETTER XIII.

Nov. 20, 1707.

Mr. Englefyld being upon his journey to London, tells me I must write to you by him, which I do, not more to comply with his desire, than to gratify my own; though I did it so lately by the messenger you sent hither: I take it too as an opportunity of sending you the fair copy of the poem[7] on Dulness, which was not then finished, and which I should not care to hazard by the common post. Mr. Englefyld is ignorant of the contents, and I hope your prudence will let him remain so, for my sake no less than your own: since, if you should reveal any thing of this nature, it would be no wonder reports should be raised, and there are some (I fear) who would be ready to improve them to my disad-

[7] The original of it in blots, and with figures of the References from copy to copy, in Mr. Pope's hand, is yet extant, among other such Brouillons of Mr Wycherley's Poems, corrected by him. W.

vantage. I am sorry you told the great man, whom you met in the court of requests that your papers were in my hands; no man alive shall ever know any such thing from me; and I give you this warning besides, that though yourself should say I had any ways assisted you, I am notwithstanding resolved to deny it.

The method of the copy I send you is very different from what it was, and much more regular: for the better help of your memory, I desire him to compare it by the figures in the margin, answering to the same in this letter. The poem is now divided into four parts, marked with the literal figures 1. 2. 3. 4. The first contains the Praise of Dulness, and shews how upon several suppositions it passes for 1. religion. 2, philosophy. 3. example. 4. wit. and 5. the cause of wit, and the end of it. The second part contains the Advantages of Dulness; 1st, in Business; and 2dly, at Court, where the similitudes of the Bias of a Bowl, and the Weights of a clock, are directly tending to the subject, though introduced before in a place where there was no mention made of those advantages (which was your only objection to my adding them). The third contains the happiness of Dulness in all stations, and shews in a great many particulars, that it is so fortunate as to be esteemed some good quality or other in all sorts of people; that it is thought quiet, sense, caution, policy, prudence, majesty, valour, circumspection, honesty, &c. The fourth part I have wholly added, as a climax which sums up all the praise, advantage, and happiness, of Dulness in a few words, and strengthens

them by the opposition of the disgrace, disadvantage, and unhappiness, of Wit, with which it concludes[8].

Though the whole be as short again as at first, there is not one thought omitted, but what is a repetition of something in your first volume, or in this very paper: Some thoughts are contracted, where they seemed encompassed with too many words; and some new expressed or added, where I thought there wanted heightening, (as you'll see particularly in the Simile of the clock-weights[9],) and the versification throughout is, I believe, such as nobody can be shocked at. The repeated permissions you give me of dealing freely with you, will (I hope) excuse what I have done: for if I have not spared you when I thought severity would do you a kindness, I have not mangled you where I thought there was no ab-

[8] This is totally omitted in the present Edition: some of the lines are these;

> " Thus Dulness, the safe opiate of the mind,
> The last kind refuge weary wit can find;
> Fit for all stations, and in each content,
> Is satisfy'd, secure, and innocent;
> No pains it takes, and no offence it gives,
> Unfear'd, unhated, undisturb'd, it lives," &c.

[9] It was originally thus expressed,

> " As clocks run fastest when most lead is on."

in a letter of Mr. Pope's to Mr. Wycherley, dated April 3, 1705, and in a Paper of verses of his, To the Author of a Poem called Successio, which got out in a Miscellany in 1712, three years before Mr. Wycherley died, and two after he had laid aside the whole design of publishing any poems. P.

These two similies of the *Bias of a Bowl*, and the *Weights of a Clock*, were at length put into the first book of the *Dunciad*. And thus we have the history of their birth, fortunes, and final establishment. W.

solute need of amputation. As to particulars, I can satisfy you better when we meet; in the mean time pray write to me when you can, you cannot too often.

LETTER XIV.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Nov. 22, 1707.

You may see by my style, I had the happiness and satisfaction to receive yesterday, by the hands of Mr. Englefyld, your extreme kind and obliging letter, the 20th of this month; which, like all the rest of yours, did at once mortify me, and make me vain; since it tells me, with so much more wit, sense, and kindness, than mine can express, that my letters are always welcome to you. So that even whilst your kindness invites me to write to you, your wit and judgment forbid me; since I may return you a letter, but never an answer.

Now, as for your owning your assistance to me, in overlooking my unmusical numbers, and harsher sense, and correcting them both with your genius, or judgment; I must tell you, I always own it (in spite of your unpoetic modesty) who would do with your friendship as your charity; conceal your bounty to magnify the obligation: and even while you lay on your friend the favour, acquit him of the debt: But that shall not serve your turn; I will always

own, it is my infallible Pope, has, or would redeem me from a poetical damning, the second time; and save my rhymes from being condemned to the critics' flames to all eternity; but (by the faith you profess) you know your works of supererogation, transferred upon an humble acknowledging sinner, may save even him; having good works enough of your own besides, to ensure yours, and their immortality.

And now for the pains you have taken to recommend my Dulness, by making it more methodical. I give you a thousand thanks; since true and natural dulness is shewn more by its pretence to form and method, as the sprightliness[1] of wit by despising both. I thank you a thousand times for your repeated invitations to come to Binfield: You will find, it will be as hard for you to get quit of my mercenary kindness to you, as it would be for me to deserve, or return yours: However, it shall be the endeavour of my future life, as it will be to demonstrate myself

Your, etc.

LETTER XV.

Nov. 29, 1707.

THE compliments you make me, in regard of any inconsiderable service I could do you, are very un-

[1] By *sprightliness* he must mean *extravagance of wit*. For sober wit, would no more despise *method* that it would despise *words*, or any other vehicle it uses, to make itself seen to advantage. W.

kind, and do but tell me in other words, that my friend has so mean an opinion of me, as to think I expect acknowledgments for trifles; which upon my faith I shall equally take amiss, whether made to myself, or to any other. For God's sake (my dear friend) think better of me, and believe I desire no sort of favour so much, as that of serving you more considerably than I have been yet able to do.

I shall proceed in this manner with some others of your pieces; but since you desire I would not deface your copy for the future, and only mark the repetitions; I must, as soon as I have marked these, transcribe what is left on another paper; and in that, blot, alter, and add, all I can devise, for their improvement. For you are sensible, the omission of Repetitions is but one, and the easiest part, of yours and my design; there remaining besides to rectify the Method, to connect the Matter, and to mend the Expression and Versification. I will go next upon the poems of Solitude, on the Public, and on the Mixt Life; the Bill of Fare, the Praises of Avarice, and some others.

I must take notice of what you say of "my pains to make your dulness methodical;" and of your hint, "that the sprightliness of wit despises method." This is true enough, if by wit you mean no more than fancy or conceit; but in the better notion of wit, considered as propriety, surely method is not only necessary for perspicuity and harmony of parts, but gives beauty even to the minute and particular thoughts, which receive an additional advantage from those which precede or follow in their due

place. You remember a simile Mr. Dryden[2] used in conversation, of feathers in the crowns of the wild Indians, which they not only choose for the beauty of their colours, but place them in such a manner as to reflect a lustre on each other. I will not disguise any of my sentiments from you; to methodize in your case, is full as necessary as to strike out; otherwise you had better destroy the whole frame, and reduce them into single thoughts in prose, like Rochefoucault, as I have more than once hinted to you.

LETTER XVI.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Feb. 28, 1707-8.

I HAVE had yours of the 23d of this instant, for which I give you many thanks, since I find by it, that even absence (the usual bane of love or friendship) cannot lessen yours, no more than mine. As to your hearing of my being ill, I am glad, and sorry for the report: In the first place, glad that it was not true; and in the next, sorry that it should give you any disturbance, or concern more than ordinary for me; for which, as well as your concern for my future well-being or life, I think myself most eternally obliged to you; assuring, your concern for either will make me more careful of both. Yet for your

[2] This beautiful simile is worth recording, for its justness and elegance. His poems have not a better.

sake I love this life so well, that I shall the less think of the other; but it is in your power to ensure my happiness in one and the other, both by your society, and good example, so not only contribute to my felicity here, but hereafter.

Now as to your excuse for the plainness of your style, I must needs tell you, that friendship is much more acceptable to a true friend than wit, which is generally false reasoning; and a friend's reprimand often shews more friendship than his compliment: nay love, which is more than friendship, is often seen by our friends' correction of our follies or crimes. Upon this test of your friendship I intend to put you when I return to London, and thence to you at Binfield, which, I hope, will be within a month.

Next to the news of your good health, I am pleased with the good news of your going to print some of your poems, and proud to be known by them to the public for your friend; who intend (perhaps the same way) to be revenged of you for your kindness; by taking your name in vain in some of my future madrigals: yet so as to let the world know, my love or esteem for you are no more poetic than my talent in scribling. But of all the arts of fiction I desire you to believe I want that of feigning friendship, and that I am sincerely

Your, etc.

LETTER XVII.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

May 13, 1708.

I HAVE received yours of the first of May. Your pastoral muse outshines in her modest and natural dress all Apollo's court-ladies, in their more artful, laboured, and costly finery. Therefore I am glad to find by your letter you design your country-beauty of a muse shall appear at court and in public: to outshine all the farded, lewd, confident, affected Town-dowdies, who aim at being honour'd only to their shame: but her artful innocence (on the contrary) will gain more honour as she becomes public; and, in spite of custom, will bring modesty again into fashion, or at least make her sister-rivals of this age blush for spite, if not for shame. As for my stale, antiquated, poetical puss, whom you would keep in countenance by saying she has once been tolerable, and would yet pass muster by a little licking over; it is true that (like most vain antiquated jades which have once been passable) she yet affects youthfulness in her age, and would still gain a few admirers (who the more she seeks or labours for their liking are but more her contemners). Nevertheless she is resolved henceforth to be so cautious as to appear very little more in the world, except it be as an Attendant on your Muse, or as a foil, not a rival to her wit, or fame: so that let your Country-Gentlewoman appear

when she will in the world[3], my old worn out jade of a lost reputation shall be her attendant into it, to procure her admirers; as an old whore, who can get no more friends of her own, bawds for others, to make sport or pleasure yet, one way or other, for mankind. I approve of your making Tonson your muse's introductor into the world, or master of the ceremonies, who has been so long a pimp, or gentleman-usher to the Muses.

I wish you good fortune; since a man with store of wit, as store of money, without the help of good fortune, will never be popular; but I wish you a great many admirers, which will be some credit to my judgment as well as your wit, who always thought you had a great deal, and am

Your, etc.

LETTER XVIII.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

May 17, 1709.

I MUST thank you for a book of your Miscellanies, which Tonson sent me, I suppose, by your order;

[3] This, and what follows, is a full confutation of John Dennis and others, who asserted that Mr. Pope wrote these verses on himself (though published by Mr. Wycherley six years before his death). We find here, it was a voluntary act of his, promised beforehand, and written while Mr. Pope was absent. The first Broüillon of those verses, and the second Copy with corrections, are both yet extant in Mr. Wycherley's own hand: in another of his letters of May 18, 1708, are these words, "I have made a damned compliment in verse upon the printing your Pastorals, which you shall see when you see me." P.

and all I can tell you of it is, that nothing has lately been better received by the public than your part of it. You have only displeased the critics by pleasing them too well; having not left them a word to say for themselves, against you and your performances; so that now your hand is in, you must persevere, till my prophecies of you be fulfilled. In earnest, all the best judges of good sense or poetry, are admirers of yours; and like your part of the book so well, that the rest is liked the worse. This is true upon my word, without compliment; so that your first success will make you for all your life a poet, in spite of your wit: for a poet's success at first, like a gamester's fortune at first, is like to make him a loser at last, and to be undone by his good fortune and merit.

But hitherto your miscellanies have safely run the gauntlet, through all the coffee-houses; which are now entertained with a whimsical new news-paper, called the TATLER, which I suppose you have seen. This is the newest thing I can tell you of, except it be of the Peace, which now (most people say) is drawing to such a conclusion, as all Europe is, or must be satisfied with; so Poverty, you see, which makes peace in Westminster-hall, makes it likewise in the camp or field, throughout the world. Peace then be to you, and to me, who am now grown peaceful, and will have no contest with any man, but him who says he is more your friend or humble servant, than

Your, etc.

LETTER XIX.

May 20, 1709.

I AM glad you received the[4] Miscellany, if it were only to shew you that there are as bad poets in this nation as your servant. This modern custom of appearing in miscellanies, is very useful to the poets, who, like other thieves, escape by getting into a crowd, and herd together like Banditti, safe only in their multitude. Methinks Strada has given a good description of these kind of Collections; *Nullus hodie mortalium aut nascitur, aut moritur, aut præliatur, aut rusticatur, aut abit peregre, aut redit, aut nubit, aut est, aut non est, (nam etiam mortuis isti canunt) cui non illi exemplo cudant Epicedia, Genethliaca, Protreptica, Panegyrica, Epithalamia, Vaticinia, Propemptica, Soterica, Parænetica, Nænias, Nugas.* As to the success, which, you say, my part has met with, it is to be attributed to what you was pleased to say of me to the world; which you do well to call your prophecy, since whatever is said in my favour, must be a prediction of things that are not yet; you, like a true Godfather, engage on my part for much more than ever I can perform. My pastoral Muse, like other country girls, is but put out of countenance, by what you courtiers say to her; yet I hope you would not deceive me too far, as knowing that a young scribler's vanity needs no recruits from abroad: for nature, like an indulgent

[4] Jacob Tonson's sixth Vol. of Miscellany Poems. P.

mother, kindly takes care to supply her sons with as much of their own, as is necessary for their satisfaction. If my verses should meet with a few flying commendations, Virgil has taught me, that a young author has not too much reason to be pleased with them, when he considers that the natural consequence of praise is envy and calumny.

> —Si ultra placitum laudarit, baccare frontem
> Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.

When once a man has appeared as a poet, he may give up his pretensions to all the rich and thriving arts: those who have once made their court to those mistresses without portions, the Muses, are never like to set up for fortunes. But for my part, I shall be satisfied if I can lose my time agreeably this way, without losing my reputation: as for gaining any, I am as indifferent in the matter as Falstaffe was, and may say of fame as he did of honour, "If it comes, it comes unlook'd for; and there's an end on't." I can be content with a bare saving game, without being thought an eminent hand (with which title Jacob has graciously dignified his adventurers and volunteers in poetry). Jacob creates poets, as Kings sometimes do knights, not for their honour, but for their money. Certainly he ought to be esteemed a worker of miracles, who is grown rich by poetry.

> What Authors lose, their Booksellers have won,
> So Pimps grow rich, while Gallants are undone.

I am your, etc.

LETTER XX.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

May 26, 1709.

THE last I received from you was dated the 22d of May. I take your charitable hint to me very kindly, wherein you do like a true friend, and a true Christian, and I shall endeavour to follow your advice, as well as your example.——As for your wishing to see your friend an Hermit with you, I cannot be said to leave the world, since I shall enjoy in your conversation all that I can desire of it; nay, can learn more from you alone, than from my long experience of the great, or little vulgar in it.

As to the success of your poems in the late miscellany, which I told you of in last; upon my word I made you no compliment, for you may be assured that all sort of readers like them, except they are writers too; but for them (I must needs say) the more they like them, they ought to be the less pleased with them: so that you do not come off with a bare saving game (as you call it) but have gained so much credit at first, that you must needs support it to the last: since you set up with so great a stock of good sense, judgment, and wit, that your judgment ensures all that your wit ventures at. The salt of your wit has been enough to give a relish to the whole insipid hotch-potch it is mingled with; and you will make

Jacob's ladder[5] raise you to immortality, by which others are turned off shamefully to their damnation (for poetic thieves as they are) who think to be saved by others good works, how faulty soever their own are: but the coffee house-wits, or rather anti-wits the critics, prove their judgments by approving your wit; and even the news-mongers and poets will own, you have more invention than they; nay the detractors or the envious, who never speak well of any body (not even of those they think well of in their absence) yet will give you even in your absence their good word; and the critics only hate you, for being forced to speak well of you whether they will or no. All this is true upon the word of

Your, etc.

LETTER XXI.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

Aug. 11, 1709.

My letters, so much inferior to yours, can only make up their scarcity of sense by their number of

[5] If any thing profane can be witty, this allusion is so; but Boileau would never allow that such a union was possible. Though Jacob Tonson, whose miscellany is here meant, was Dryden's favourite Printer, yet they sometimes disagreed. And once Dryden sent him the following severe Lines, not printed in his works, descriptive of his person:

With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
With two left legs, with Judas-colour'd hair,
And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air.

lines; which is like the Spaniards paying a debt of gold with a load of brass money. But to be a *plain dealer*, I must tell you I will revenge the raillery of your letters by printing them (as Dennis did mine), without your knowledge too, which would be a revenge upon your judgment for the raillery of your wit; for some dull rogues (that is, the most in the world) might be such fools as to think what you said of me was in earnest: It is not the first time your great wits have gained reputation by their paradoxical or ironical praises: your forefathers have done it, Erasmus and others. For all mankind who know me must confess, he must be no ordinary genius, or little friend, who can find out any thing to commend in me seriously; who have given no sign of my judgment but my opinion of yours, nor mark of my wit, but my leaving off writing to the public now you are beginning to shew the world what you can do by yours: whose wit is as spiritual as your judgment infallible: in whose judgment I have an implicit faith, and shall always subscribe to it to save my works in this world, from the flames and damnation.—Pray, present my most humble service to Sir William Trumbull; for whom and whose judgment I have so profound a respect, that his example had almost made me marry, more than my nephew's ill carriage to me; having once resolved to have revenged myself upon him by my marriage, but now am resolved to make my revenge greater upon him by His marriage.

LETTER XXII.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

April 1, 1710.

I HAVE had yours on the 30th of the last month, which is kinder than I desire it should be, since it tells me you could be better pleased to be sick again in Town in my company, than to be well in the Country without it; and that you are more impatient to be deprived of happiness than of health. Yet, my dear friend, set raillery or compliment aside, I can bear your absence (which procures your health and ease) better than I can your company when you are in pain: for I cannot see you so without being so too. Your love to the Country I do not doubt, nor do you (I hope) my love to it or you, since there I can enjoy your company without seeing you in pain to give me satisfaction and pleasure; there I can have you without rivals or disturbers; without the too civil, or the too rude: without the noise of the loud or the censure of the silent: and would rather have you abuse me there with the truth, than at this distance with your compliment: since now, your business of a friend, and kindness to a friend, is by finding fault with his faults, and mending them by your obliging severity. I hope (in point of your good nature) you will have no cruel charity for those papers of mine, you are so willing to be troubled with; which I take most infinitely kind of you, and shall acknowledge with gratitude, as long as I live.

No friend can do more for his friend than preserving his reputation (nay, not by preserving his life), since by preserving his life he can only make him live about threescore or fourscore years; but by preserving his reputation he can make him live as long as the world lasts; so save him from damning, when he is gone to the devil. Therefore, I pray, condemn me in private, as the thieves do their accomplices in Newgate, to save them from condemnation by the public. Be most kindly unmerciful to my poetical faults, and do with my papers, as you country-gentlemen do with your trees, slash, cut, and lop off, the excrescences and dead parts of my withered bays, that the little remainder may live the longer, and increase the value of them by diminishing the number. I have troubled you with my papers rather to give you pain than pleasure, notwithstanding your compliment which says you take the trouble kindly: such is your generosity to your friends, that you take it kindly to be desired by them to do them a kindness; and you think it done to you, when they give you an opportunity to do it them. Wherefore you may be sure to be troubled with my letters out of interest, if not kindness; since mine to you will procure yours to me: so that I write to you more for my own sake than yours; less to make you think I write well, than to learn from you to write better. Thus you see interest in my kindness, which is like the friendship of the world, rather to make a friend than be a friend; but I am yours, as a true Plain-dealer.

LETTER XXIII.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

April 11, 1710.

If I can do part of my business at Shrewsbury in a fortnight's time (which I propose to do) I will be soon after with you, and trouble you with my company for the remainder of the summer: In the mean time I beg you to give yourself the pains of altering or leaving out what you think superfluous in my papers, that I may endeavour to print such a number of them as you and I shall think fit, about Michaelmas next. In order to which (my dear friend) I beg you to be so kind to me, as to be severe to them: that the critics may be less so; for I had rather be condemned by my friend in private, than exposed to my foes in public, the critics, or common judges, who are made such by having been old offenders themselves. Pray believe I have as much faith in your friendship and sincerity, as I have deference to your judgment; and as the best mark of a friend is telling his friend his faults in private, so the next is concealing them from the public, till they are fit to appear. In the mean time I am not a little sensible of the great kindness you do me, in the trouble you take for me, in putting my Rhimes in tune, since good sounds set off often ill sense, as the Italian songs, whose good airs, with the worst words or meaning, make the best music; so by your tuning my Welsh harp, my rough sense may be the less offen-

sive to the nicer ears of those critics, who deal more in sound than sense. Pray then take pity at once both of my readers and me, in shortening my barren abundance, and increasing their patience by it, as well as the obligations I have to you: And since no madrigaller can entertain the head unless he pleases the ear; and since the crowded Operas have left the best Comedies with the least audiences, it is a sign sound can prevail over sense; therefore soften my words, and strengthen my sense, and

Eris mihi magnus Apollo.

LETTER XXIV.

April 15, 1710.

I RECEIVED your most extreme kind letter but just now. It found me over those papers you mention, which have been my employment ever since Easter-Monday: I hope before Michaelmas to have discharged my task; which, upon the word of a friend, is the most pleasing one I could be put upon. Since you are so near going into Shropshire, (whither I shall not care to write of this matter, for fear of the miscarriage of any letters,) I must desire your leave to give you a plain and sincere account of what I have found from a more serious application to them. Upon comparison with the former volume, I find much more repeated than I till now imagined, as well as in the present volume, which, if (as you told me last) you would have me dash over with a

line, will deface the whole copy extremely, and to a degree that (I fear) may displease you. I have every where marked in the margins the page and line, both in this and the other part. But if you order me not to cross the lines, or would any way else limit my commission, you will oblige me by doing it in your next letter; for I am at once equally fearful of sparing you, and of offending you by too impudent a correction. Hitherto however I have crossed them so as to be legible, because you bade me. When I think all the repetitions are struck out in a copy, I sometimes find more upon dipping in the first volume, and the number increases so much, that, I believe, more shortening will be requisite than you may be willing to bear with, unless you are in good earnest resolved to have no thought repeated. Pray forgive this freedom[5], which as I must be sincere in this case, so I could not but take; and let me know if I am to go on at this rate, or if you could prescribe any other method.

I am very glad you continue your resolution of seeing me in my hermitage this summer; the sooner you return, the sooner I shall be happy, which indeed my want of any company that is entertaining

[5] Which Wycherley could never bring himself to do. His whole behaviour reminds one of what Voltaire has said of his intercourse with the King of Prussia, and the employment he undertook; "Tout ce que j'ai fait, pendant deux ans, pour mettre ses ouvrages de prose et de vers en état de paraitre, a été un service dangereux qui deplaisit dans le temps même qu'il affectait de m'en remercier avec effusion de cœur." He therefore wishes himself far removed from "les griffes des Rois qui font des vers et de la prose."

or esteemable, together with frequent infirmities and pains, hinder me from being in your absence. 'Tis (I am sure) a real truth, that my sickness cannot make me quite weary of myself when I have you with me; and I shall want no company but yours, when you are here.

You see how freely, and with how little care, I talk rather than write to you: this is one of the many advantages of friendship, that one can say to one's friend the things that stand in need of pardon, and at the same time be sure of it. Indeed I do not know whether or no the letters of friends are the worse for being fit for none else to read. 'Tis an argument of the trust reposed in a friend's good-nature, when one writes such things to him as require a good portion of it. I have experienced yours so often and so long, that I can now no more doubt of the greatness of it, than I hope you do of the greatness of my affection, or of the sincerity with which I am, etc.

LETTER XXV.

FROM MR. WYCHERLEY.

April 27, 1710.

You give me an account in your letter of the trouble you have undergone for me, in comparing my papers you took down with you, with the old printed volume, and with one another, of that bundle you have in your hands; amongst which (you say) you find numerous repetitions of the same thoughts and

subjects; all which, I must confess, my want of memory has prevented me from imagining, as well as made me capable of committing; since, of all figures, that of Tautology is the last I would use, or least forgive myself for. But seeing is believing; wherefore I will take some pains to examine and compare those papers in your hands with one another, as well as with the former printed copies, or books of my damned miscellanies; all which (as bad a memory as I have) with a little more pains and care, I think, I can remedy. Therefore I would not have you give yourself more trouble[6] about them, which may prevent the pleasure you have, and may give the world in writing upon new subjects of your own, whereby you will much better entertain yourself and others. Now as to your remarks upon the whole volume of my papers; all that I desire of you is to mark in the margin (without defacing the copy at all) either any repetition of words, matter, or sense, or any thoughts of words too much repeated; which if you will be so kind as to do for me, you will supply my want of memory with your good one, and my deficiencies of sense, with the infallibility of yours; which if you do, you will most infinitely oblige me, who almost repent the trouble I have given you, since so much. Now as to what you call freedom with me, (which you desire me to forgive,) you may be assured I would not forgive you unless you did use it; for I am so far from thinking your

[6] Here is the beginning and first stroke of that jealousy and peevishness which he afterward shewed to his young and useful friend.

plainness an offence to me, that I think it a charity and an obligation; which I shall always acknowledge, with all sort of gratitude to you for it; who am, &c.

All the news I have to send you, is, that poor Mr. Betterton is going to make his Exit from the stage of this world, the gout being gotten up into his head, and (as the physicians say) will certainly carry him off suddenly.

LETTER XXVI.

May 2, 1710.

I AM sorry you persist to take ill at my not accepting your invitation, and to find (if I mistake not) your exception not unmix'd with some suspicion. Be certain I shall most carefully observe your request, not to cross over, or deface the copy of your papers for the future, and only to mark in the margin the Repetitions. But as this can serve no further than to get rid of those repetitions, and no way rectify the Method nor connect the Matter, nor improve the Poetry in expression or numbers, without further blotting, adding, and altering; so it really is my opinion and desire, that you should take your papers out of my hands into your own, and that no alterations may be made but when both of us are present; when you may be satisfied with every blot, as well as every addition, and nothing be put upon the papers but what you shall give your own sanction and assent to, at the same time.

Do not be so unjust, as to imagine from hence that I would decline any part of this task; on the contrary you know, I have been at the pains of transcribing some pieces, at once to comply with your desire of not defacing the copy, and yet to lose no time in proceeding upon the correction. I will go on the same way, if you please; though truly it is (as I have often told you) my sincere opinion, that the greater part would make a much better figure as Single Maxims and reflections in prose, after the manner of your favourite Rochefoucault, than in verse[7]: And this, when nothing more is done but marking the repetitions in the margin, will be an easy task to proceed upon, notwithstanding the bad Memory you complain of. I am unfeignedly, dear Sir, Your, etc.

A. POPE.

[7] Mr. Wycherley lived five years after, to December 1715, but little progress was made in this design, through his old age, and the increase of his infirmities. However, some of the Verses, which had been touched by Mr. P. with CCCVIII of these Maxims in Prose, were found among his papers, which having the misfortune to fall into the hands of a Mercenary, were published in 1728, in octavo, under the Title of the Posthumous Works of William Wycherley, Esq. P.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

W. WALSH[8], ESQ.;

From the Year 1705 to 1707.

LETTER I.

MR. WALSH TO MR. WYCHERLEY.

April 20, 1705.

I RETURN you the papers[9] you favoured me with, and had sent them to you yesterday morning, but that I thought to have brought them to you last night myself. I have read them over several times with great satisfaction. The Preface is very judicious and very learned; and the verses very tender and easy. The Author seems to have a particular genius for that kind of poetry, and a judgment that much exceeds the years you told me he was of. He has taken very freely from the ancients, but what he has mixed of his own with theirs, is not inferior to what

[8] Of Abberley in Worcestershire, Gentleman of the Horse in Queen Anne's reign, Author of several beautiful pieces in Prose and Verse, and in the opinion of Mr. Dryden (in his postscript to Virgil) the best critic of our nation in his time. P.

[9] Mr. Pope's Pastorals. P.

he has taken from them. 'Tis no flattery at all to say, that Virgil had written nothing so good at his age[1]. I shall take it as a favour if you will bring me acquainted with him: and if he will give himself the trouble any morning to call at my house, I shall be very glad to read the verses over with him, and give him my opinion of the particulars more largely than I can well do in this letter. I am, Sir, etc.

LETTER II.

MR. WALSH TO MR. POPE.

June 24, 1706.

I RECEIVED the favour of your letter[2], and shall be very glad of the continuance of a correspondence, by which I am like to be so great a gainer. I hope

[1] Sixteen.

[2] Walsh, though a feeble and flimsy poet, yet from these letters, and from the Essay on Pastoral, which he gave to Dryden, appears to have been a man of some taste and literature, but of narrow ideas in poetry. He seems to be the first of our critics that attended much to the *Italian* poets. We ought to esteem him for his early praise and encouragement of Pope, which perhaps contributed to determine Pope to devote himself to the study of Poetry. The best of Walsh's poetry is a Parody on the Fourth Eclogue of Virgil, in which *Tories*, *Nonjurors*, and *Jacobites*, are vigorously attacked and ridiculed; and an Imitation of the Justum et tenacem of Horace, B. 3. Ode 3. in which a speech of King William, from stanza the 4th to the 13th, is given with much energy and force. Some of Addison's best verses are also a translation of this very Ode; and it is remarkable that Oldmixon relates it was he that desired Mr. Addison to give a translation of this Ode; certainly one of his most spirited compositions.

when I have the happiness of seeing you again in London, not only to read over the verses I have now of yours, but more that you have written since; for I make no doubt but any one who writes so well, must write more. Not that I think the most voluminous poets always the best; I believe the contrary is rather true. I mentioned somewhat to you in London of a Pastoral Comedy, which I should be glad to hear you had thought upon since. I find Menage in his observations upon Tasso's Aminta, reckons up fourscore pastoral plays in Italian: And in looking over my old Italian books, I find a great many pastoral and piscatory plays, which, I suppose, Menage reckons together. I find also by Menage, that Tasso is not the first that writ in that kind, he mentioning another before him which he himself had never seen, nor indeed have I. But as the Aminta, Pastor Fido[3], and Filli di Sciro of Bonarelli, are the three best, so, I think, there is no dispute but that Aminta is the best of the three: Not but that the discourses in Pastor Fido are more entertaining and copious in several people's opinion, though not so proper for pastoral; and the fable of Bonarelli more surprising. I do not remember many in other languages, that have written in this kind with success. Racan's *Bergeries* are much inferior to his lyric poems; and the Spaniards are all too full of conceits. Rapin will have the design of pastoral plays to be taken

[3] It is surprising that Walsh should make no mention of that exquisite Pastoral Comedy, *The Faithful Shepherdess*, of *Beaumont* and *Fletcher*; nor of the Comus of Milton, who in truth has borrowed much from Fletcher.

from the Cyclops of Euripides. I am sure there is nothing of this kind in English worth mentioning, and therefore you have that field open to yourself. You see I write to you without any sort of constraint or method, as things come into my head, and therefore use the same freedom with me, who am, etc.

LETTER III.

TO MR. WALSH.

Windsor Forest, July 2, 1706.

I CANNOT omit the first opportunity of making you my acknowledgments for reviewing those papers of mine. You have no less right to correct me, than the same hand that raised a tree has to prune it. I am convinced as well as you that one may correct too much; for in poetry as in painting, a man may lay colours one upon another till they stiffen and deaden the piece. Besides, to bestow heightening[4] on every part is monstrous: Some parts ought to be lower than the rest; and nothing looks more ridiculous than a work, where the thoughts, however different in their own nature, seem all on a level: 'Tis like a meadow newly mown, where weeds, grass, and flowers, are all laid even, and appear undistin-

[4] It is impossible not to stop and admire the good taste and sound judgment of our Author, so well expressed in such early youth. What has Horace, Vida, or Boileau, said better on the difficult subject of *correcting*, and making every passage uniformly splendid?

guished. I believe too that sometimes our first thoughts are the best, as the first squeezing of the grapes makes the finest and richest wine.

I have not attempted any thing of a pastoral comedy, because I think, the taste of our age will not relish a poem of that sort. People seek for what they call wit, on all subjects, and in all places; not considering that nature loves truth so well, that it hardly ever admits of flourishing: Conceit is to nature what paint is to beauty; it is not only needless, but impairs what it would improve. There is a certain majesty in simplicity which is far above all the quaintness of wit; insomuch that the critics have excluded wit from the loftiest poetry, as well as the lowest, and forbid it to the Epic no less than the Pastoral. I should certainly displease all those who are charmed with Guarini and Bonarelli, and imitate Tasso not only in the simplicity[5] of his Thoughts, but in that of the Fable too. If surprising discoveries should have place in the story of a pastoral comedy, I believe it would be more agreeable to probability to make them the effects of chance than of design; intrigue not being very consistent with that innocence, which ought to constitute a shepherd's character. There is nothing in all the Aminta (as I remember) but happens by mere accident; unless it be the meeting of Aminta with Sylvia at the fountain, which

[5] Dr. Blair has observed, that Bouhours, Fontenelle, Addison, and the last translators of Virgil's Eclogues, have injured and misrepresented Tasso as too much abounding in points and conceits, and seem to misunderstand what Sylvia says on viewing herself in a fountain with a garland of flowers on her head.

is the contrivance of Daphne; and even that is the most simple in the world: The contrary is observable in Pastor Fido, where Corisca is so perfect a mistress of intrigue, that the plot could not have been brought to pass without her. I am inclined to think the pastoral comedy has another disadvantage as to the manners: Its general design is to make us in love with the innocence of rural life, so that to introduce shepherds of a vicious character must in some measure debase it: And hence it may come to pass, that even the virtuous characters will not shine so much, for want of being opposed to their contraries. These thoughts are purely my own, and therefore I have reason to doubt them: but I hope your judgment will set me right.

I would beg your opinion too as to another point: it is, how far the liberty of borrowing may extend; I have defended it sometimes by saying, that it seems not so much the perfection of sense[6], to say things that had never been said before, as to express those best that have been said oftenest; and that writers, in the case of borrowing from others, are like trees, which of themselves would produce only one sort of fruit, but by being grafted upon others may yield variety. A mutual commerce makes poetry flourish; but then poets, like merchants, should repay with something of their own what they take from others; not, like pirates, make prize of all they meet. I desire you to tell me sincerely if I have not stretched this licence too far in these pastorals? I hope to be-

[6] He should rather have said, *the perfection of conception.* W.

come a critic by your precepts, and a poet by your example. Since I have seen your Eclogues, I cannot be much pleased with my own; however, you have not taken away all my vanity, so long as you give me leave to profess myself yours, etc.

LETTER IV.

FROM MR. WALSH.

July 20, 1706.

I HAD no sooner returned you thanks for the favour of your letter, but that I was in hopes of giving you an account at the same time of my journey to Windsor; but I am now forced to put that quite off, being engaged to go to my corporation at Richmond in Yorkshire. I think you are perfectly in the right in your notions of Pastoral; but I am of opinion, that the redundancy of wit you mention, though it is what pleases the common people, is not what ever pleases the best judges. Pastor Fido indeed has had more admirers[7] than Aminta; but I will venture to say, there is a great deal of difference between the admirers of one and the other. Corisca, which is a

[7] Tasso, on seeing this Pastoral Comedy represented, is reported to have said; "If Guarini had not seen my *Amintas*, he had not excelled it." But this was not a true judgment. *La Filli di Sciro*, of Bonarelli, is also full of unnatural characters, and of distorted conceits. It was first published, says Fontanini, at Ferrari, in quarto, with cuts, 1607; afterward splendidly at Paris, in quarto; also by Cramoisy, 1621; and elegantly at London, in octavo, 1728.

character generally admired by the ordinary judges, is intolerable in a Pastoral; and Bonarelli's fancy of making his shepherdess in love with two men equally, is not to be defended, whatever pains he has taken to do it. As for what you ask of the liberty of borrowing; it is very evident the best Latin Poets have extended this very far; and none so far as Virgil, who was the best of them. As for the Greek Poets, if we cannot trace them so plainly, it is perhaps because we have none before them; it is evident that most of them borrowed from Homer, and Homer has been accused of burning those that wrote before him, that his thefts might not be discovered. The best of the modern Poets in all languages are those that have the nearest copied the Ancients[8]. Indeed, in all the common subjects of Poetry, the thoughts are so obvious, (at least if they are natural,) that whoever writes last, must write things like what have been said before[9]: But they may as well applaud the An-

[8] The superiority of ancient writers over the modern, may perhaps not unjustly be ascribed, to a genial climate, that gave such a happy temperament of body as was most proper to produce fine sensations; to a language most harmonious, copious, clear, and forcible; to the many public encouragements and honours bestowed on the cultivators of literature; to the emulation excited among the generous youth, by exhibitions of their various performances at the solemn games; to the freedom of their governments; to an inattention to the arts of lucre and commerce, which totally engross and debase the minds of the moderns; and above all, to an exemption from the necessity of overloading their natural faculties with learning and languages, with which we in these later times are obliged to qualify ourselves for writers, if we expect to be read.

[9] This subject has been discussed at much length, and with much acuteness and ingenuity, by Dr. Hurd, in the *Discourse* on

cients for the arts of eating and drinking, and accuse the Moderns of having stolen those inventions from them: it being evident in all such cases, that whoever lived first, must first find them out. It is true, indeed, when

unus et alter
Assuitur pannus,

when there are one or two bright thoughts stolen, and all the rest is quite different from it, a poem makes a very foolish figure: But when it is all melted down together, and the gold of the Ancients so mixed with that of the Moderns, that none can distinguish the one from the other, I can never find fault with it. I cannot however but own to you, that there are others of a different opinion, and that I have shewn your verses to some who have made that objection to them. I have so much company round me while I write this, and such a noise in my ears, that it is impossible I should write any thing but nonsense, so must break off abruptly. I am, Sir,

Your most affectionate,
And most humble Servant.

Poetical Imitation: in which the difficulty of distinguishing RESEMBLANCES from THEFTS, is endeavoured to be pointed out.

LETTER V.

FROM MR. WALSH.

Sept. 9, 1706.

At my return from the North I received the favour of your letter, which had lain there till then. Having been absent about six weeks, I read over your Pastorals again, with a great deal of pleasure, and to judge the better read Virgil's Eclogues, and Spencer's Calendar, at the same time; and, I assure you, I continue the same opinion I had always of them. By the little hints you take upon all occasions to improve them, it is probable you will make them yet better against winter; though there is a mean to be kept even in that too, and a man may correct his verses till he takes away the true spirit of them; especially if he submits to the correction of some who pass for great Critics, by mechanical rules, and never enter into the true design and Genius of an author. I have seen some of these that would hardly allow any one good Ode in Horace, who cry Virgil wants fancy, and that Homer is very incorrect. While they talk at this rate, one would think them above the common rate of mortals: But generally they are great admirers of Ovid and Lucan; and when they write themselves, we find out all the mystery. They scan their verses upon their fingers; run after Conceits and glaring thoughts:

Their poems are all made up of Couplets[1], of which the first may be the last, or the last first, without any sort of prejudice to their works; in which there is no design, or method, or any thing natural or just. For you are certainly in the right, that in all writings whatsoever (not poetry only) nature is to be followed; and we should be jealous of ourselves for being fond of Similies, Conceits, and what they call saying fine Things. When we were in the North, my Lord Wharton shewed me a letter he had received from a certain great General in Spain[2]; I told him I would by all means[3] have that General recalled and set to writing here at home, for it was impossible that a man with so much Wit as he shewed, could be fit to command an Army, or do any other business[4]. As for what you say of Expression: It is indeed the same thing to Wit, as Dress is to Beauty: I have seen many women over-dressed, and several look better in a careless night-gown, with their hair about their ears, than Mademoiselle Spanheim dressed for a ball. I do not design to be in London till towards the parliament: then I shall certainly be there; and hope by that time you will have finished your Pas-

[1] The most usual and common blemish of all modern English poetry; and in great measure occasioned, and almost unavoidably, by the nature and use of rhyme.

[2] The Earl of Peterborow.

[3] It is maxim, says Hume, propagated by the dunces of all countries, that a man of *genius* is unfit for *business*.

[4] Mr. Walsh's remark will be thought very innocent, when the reader is informed that it was made on the Earl of Peterborow, just before the glorious campaigns of Barcelona and Valentia. P.

torals as you would have them appear in the world, and particularly the third, of Autumn, which I have not yet seen. Your last Eclogue being upon the same subject as that of mine on Mrs. Tempest's Death, I should take it very kindly in you to give it a little turn, as if it were to the memory of the same Lady, if they were not written for some particular Woman whom you would make immortal. You may take occasion to shew the difference between Poets' Mistresses, and other men's. I only hint this, which you may either do, or let alone, just as you think fit. I shall be very much pleased to see you again in Town, and to hear from you in the mean time. I am, with very much esteem,

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

Oct. 22, 1706.

AFTER the thoughts I have already sent you on the subject of English Versification, you desire my opinion as to some farther particulars. There are indeed certain Niceties[5], which, though not much observed even by correct versifiers, I cannot but think, deserve to be better regarded.

1. It is not enough[6] that nothing offends the ear,

[5] There are perhaps readers that will say these niceties remind them of Æschylus and Euripides weighing their verses carefully in a pair of scales, in the fifth act of the Frogs of Aristophanes.

[6] An uncommon maturity of taste and judgment, in so young a person as our author, appears in these remarks on English

but a good poet will adapt the very Sounds, as well as Words, to the things he treats of. So that there is (if one may express it so) a Style of Sound. As in describing a gliding stream, the numbers should run easy and flowing; in describing a rough torrent or deluge, sonorous and swelling, and so of the rest. This is evident every where in Homer and Virgil, and no where else, that I know of, to any observable degree. The following examples will make this plain, which I have taken from *Vida.*

Molle viam tacito lapsu per lævia radit.
Incedit tardo molimine subsidendo.
Luctantes ventos, tempestatesque sonoras.
Immenso cum præcipitans ruit Oceano Nox.
Telum imbelle sine ictu conjecit.
Tolle moras, cape saxa manu, cape robora, Pastor.
Ferte citi flammas, date tela, repellite pestem.

This, I think, is what very few observe in practice, and is undoubtedly of wonderful force in imprinting the image on the reader: We have one excellent example of it in our language, Mr. Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's day, entitled, *Alexander's Feast.*

2. Every nice ear must (I believe) have observed, that in any smooth English verse of ten syllables, there is naturally a *Pause* at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllable. It is upon these the ear rests, and upon the

Versification. This subject has been since much enlarged upon, and more amply discussed, by several writers of considerable abilities, particularly by Lord Kaimes, and Dr. Blair, by the learned Mr. Samuel Say, and above all, by the ingenious Mr. Webb, in his *Remarks* on the Beauties of Poetry, and in *Observations* on Poetry and Music. Cowley, in his excellent notes on his Davideis, has given some good remarks on this Representative Versification.

judicious change and management of which depends the variety of Versification. For example:

At the fifth.

Where'er thy navy | spreads her canvas wings,

At the fourth.

Homage to thee | and peace to all she brings.

At the sixth.

Like tracts of leverets | in morning snow.

Now I fancy, that, to preserve an exact Harmony and Variety, the Pause at the 4th or 6th[7] should not

[7] A rule he himself did not always observe; for he continued the pause at the *fourth* syllable, sometimes, through six verses together.

On her white breast———

So on, for the six following lines; and also in Essay on Man; Ep. I. v. 269.

How tiresome and disgusting is the perpetual monotony of the French Versification, in which the pause always falls on the sixth syllable, each line consisting of twelve syllables, as in our *Alexandrine;*

C'est en vain qu'au Parnasse | un temeraire Auteur
Pense de l'Art des Vers | atteindre la hauteur.

The Nymphs in twilight shades | of tangled thickets mourn.

The remarks in this letter relate solely to rhyme, and extend not to that superior harmony of which blank verse is susceptible, by varying these pauses, and fixing it on any of the ten syllables of which the line is composed; many examples of which there are in Milton, from the first syllable to the ninth, which has given to his Versification so much harmony and variety. Let the defenders of rhyme consider these words of one of the best of critics; "Similitudine tædium ac satietatem creat; quodque est dulcius, magis perit; amittitque et fidem, et affectus, motusque omnes." QUINTIL. Instit. Orat. 9. c. 4.

be continued above three lines together, without the interposition of another: else it will be apt to weary the ear with one continued tone, at least it does mine: That at the fifth runs quicker, and carries not quite so dead a weight, so tires not so much, though it be continued longer.

3. Another nicety is in relation to Expletives, whether words or syllables, which are made use of purely to supply a vacancy: *Do* before verbs plural is absolutely such; and it is not improbable but future refiners may explode *did* and *does* in the same manner, which are almost always used for the sake of rhyme. The same cause has occasioned the promiscuous use of *you* and *thou* to the same person, which can never sound so graceful as either one or the other.

4. I would also object to the irruption of Alexandrine verses[8], of twelve syllables, which, I think, should never be allowed but when some remarkable beauty or propriety in them atones for the liberty: Mr. Dryden has been too free of these, especially in his latter works. I am of the same opinion as to Triple Rhymes.

5. I could equally object to the repetition of the

[8] He has not admitted one *Alexandrine* verse, or *Triple* rhyme, into his *Essay on Man*, nor into his *Four* Ethic Epistles, nor his *Eloisa*, nor *Dunciad*; and but rarely, too rarely, *Fenton* thought, into his *Iliad*; the ear, in so long a work, wanting some variety. But, in truth, the *Alexandrine* as much destroys the uniformity of numbers, as if an *Iambic* verse had, from time to time, been introduced among the *Hexameters* of Virgil. Cowley was the first who introduced Alexandrines in the midst of ten syllable lines.

same Rhymes within four or six lines of each other, as tiresome to the ear through their Monotony.

6. Monosyllable Lines[9], unless very artfully managed, are stiff, or languishing: but may be beautiful to express Melancholy, Slowness, or Labour.

7. To come to the Hiatus, or Gap between two words, which is caused by two vowels opening on each other (upon which you desire me to be particular); I think the rule in this case is either to use the Cæsura, or admit the Hiatus, just as the ear is

[9] On the contrary, as Mr. Webb very judiciously observes, "Monosyllables may full as happily be employed on the *opposite* motions and affections;

Me; fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole.
Ah! come not, write not, think not, once of me.

In our verse it is the sense that gives vigour to the movement. Monosyllables bring our ideas into a closer order, and more immediate comparison; consequently their relations become more striking. The feeblest and heaviest lines in our language are those which are overcharged with polysyllables." The same elegant critic has afterward made the following remark on Alexandrine verses: "A modern critic is of opinion, that the Alexandrine is best calculated to exemplify *swiftness*, because it most naturally exhibits the act of passing through a long space in a short time. Is it meant, that we pass through the long space of the Alexandrine, in as short a time as we should through the shorter space of the Pentameter? But this cannot be; for supposing an equal fluency in the syllables employed in each, their times must be always in proportion of twelve to ten. That line so often cited as an example of *swiftness*, sets this matter in the clearest light;

Αὖτις ἔπειτα πέδονδε—&c.

From whence springs the *swiftness* in this instance? Is it not from hence, that we pass through a verse of seventeen syllables, in the same *time* that we should through a verse of thirteen? But our Alexandrine can never consist of more than twelve syllables. The inference is obvious." Observations on Poetry, page 178.

least shocked by either: for the Cæsura sometimes offends the ear more than the Hiatus itself, and our language is naturally overcharged with consonants: As for example: If in this verse,

The old have int'rest ever in their eye,

we should say, to avoid the Hiatus,

But th' old have int'rest.

The Hiatus which has the worst effect, is when one word ends with the same vowel that begins the following; and next to this, those vowels whose sounds come nearest to each other, are most to be avoided. O, A, or U, will bear a more full and graceful sound than E, I, or Y. I know, some people will think these Observations trivial, and therefore I am glad to corroborate them by some great authorities, which I have met with in Tully and Quintilian. In the fourth book of Rhetoric to Herennius[1], are these words: *Fugiemus crebras vocalium concursiones, quæ vastam atque hiantem reddunt orationem; ut hoc est, Baccæ æneæ amœnissimæ impendebant.* And Quintilian, l. ix. cap. 4. *Vocalium concursus cum accidit, hiat et intersistit, et quasi laborat oratio. Pessime longæ quæ easdem inter se literas committunt, sonabunt: Præcipuus tamen erit hiatus earum quæ cavo aut patulo ore efferuntur.* E *plenior litera est,* I *angustior.* But he goes on to reprove the excess on the other hand of being too solicitous in this matter, and says admirably, *Nescio an negligentia in hoc, aut solicitudo sit*

[1] Our author, in these early years, seems to be well acquainted with Quintilian and Cicero; I see, however, few traces of Dionysius of Halicarnassus; nor of Demetrius Phalereus.

pejor. So likewise *Tully (Orator. ad Brut.) Theopompum reprehendunt, quod eas literas tanto opere fugerit, etsi idem magister ejus Socrates:* which last author, as Turnebus on Quintilian observes, has hardly one Hiatus in all his works. Quintilian tells us, that Tully and Demosthenes did not much observe this nicety[2], though Tully himself says in his Orator, *Crebra ista vocum concursio, quam, magna ex parte vitiosam, fugit Demosthenes.* If I am not mistaken, Malherbe of all the moderns has been the most scrupulous in this point; and I think Menage in his observations upon him says, he has not one in his poems. To conclude[3], I believe the Hiatus should be avoided with more care in Poetry than in Oratory; and I would constantly try to prevent it unless where the cutting it off is more prejudicial to the sound than the Hiatus itself. I am, etc.

A. POPE.

[2] Neither was it observed by Plato or by Thucydides. The Greeks never admitted the Hiatus in the Trimeter Iambics of their Tragedy or Comedy. In Epic Poetry and Hexameter Verse it had a place; Clarke gives six examples of it, and its use, in his Notes on the 4th Book of the Iliad, ver. 456. Menage has made some useful remarks on this subject in his large notes on the Works of Malherbe. And on this subject says Boileau, Art. Poet. Chant. i. v. 107.

> Guardez qu'une voyelle à courir trop hâtée,
> Ne soit d'une voyelle en son chemin heurtée.

[3] I rather wonder he has in this Letter said nothing of *Alliteration*, of which his master, Dryden, was so fond, and which he practised with so much success; but which has been carried to a ridiculous excess by some late writers of note. A curious and learned discourse *on the Alliterative Metre*, without rhyme, (for *Alliteration* was a favourite figure of rude poets,) is given in the 2d vol. of the entertaining *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*.

Mr. Walsh died at forty-nine years old, in the year 1708, the year before the Essay on Criticism was printed, which concludes with his Eulogy.

To these observations on English Versification, I desire to add the following from the sensible and ingenious Mr. Webb:

"The sole aim of versification is harmony. To understand this properly, we must divide it into two kinds. The first consists of a general flow of verse, most pleasing to the ear, but independent on the sense: the second, in bringing the sound or measure of the verse to correspond with, and accompany, the idea. The former may be called a verbal harmony, the latter a sentimental. If we consider the flow of verse merely as music, it will then be allowed, that variety is less necessary than sweetness; and that a continued repetition of the same movements must be tiresome in poetry, as it would in music. On examining Mr. Pope's verses, we shall find that in eighteen out of twenty, the pauses rest on the fourth and last, or the fifth or last syllables; and that, almost without exception, the period is divided into two equal lines, and, as it were, linked by the rhyme into a couplet. For example,

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul;
That chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Great in the Earth, as in the Ethereal frame:
Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees:
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

Essay on Man.

"Every ear must feel the ill effect of the monotony in these lines; the cause of it is obvious; this verse consists of ten syllables, or five feet; when the pause falls on the fourth syllable, we shall find, that we pronounce the six last in the same time that we do the four first; so that the couplet is not only divided into two equal lines, but each line, with respect to time, is divided into two equal parts; as,

Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,
Glows in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees:

Or else, the pause falls on the fifth syllable, and then the line is divided with a mechanic exactness. As,

Spreads undivided, operates unspent.

"Mr. Pope in a letter to Mr. Walsh, speaking of English verse,

says, "There is naturally a Pause at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllable. It is upon this the ear rests, and upon the judicious change and management of which depends the variety of versification." Of this he gives the following examples:
At the fifth.

Where'er thy navy spreads her canvas wings,

At the fourth.

Homage to thee, and peace to all she brings.

At the sixth.

Like tracts of leverets, in morning snow.

"In this place Mr. Pope takes no notice of the second pause, which always rests on the last word of each line, and is strongly marked by the rhyme. But, it is on the balance between the two pauses, that the monotony of the verse depends. Now this balance is governed by the equal division of the line in point of time. Thus, if you repeat the two first examples given, you will find no difference as to the time, whether the pause falls on the fourth or fifth syllable; and this, I think, will extend even to the last example; or, if there should be any difference, it is so trifling, that it will generally escape the ear. But this is not so in blank verse; for the lines being made often to run one into the other, the second pause is sunk; the balance, from the equal division of each line, is removed, and by changing the pauses at pleasure, an open is given into an unlimited variety.——

"Observe the effects in the first lines of Paradise Lost.

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man,
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heavenly muse.

"In these, and the lines that immediately follow, the pauses are shifted through all the ten syllables.

"But this variety is not inseparable from the nature of blank verse. In Addison's Cato, there is, I think, the very same monotony which we have condemned in Mr. Pope: Thus,

The dawn is overcast, the morning low'rs,
And heavily in clouds brings on the day;
The great, th' important day
Big with the fate of Cato and of Rome.

Again,

Who knows not this, but what can Cato do
Against a world, a base degenerate world,
That courts the yoke, and bows the neck to Cæsar?
Pent up in Utica he vainly forms
A poor epitome of Roman greatness.

This is the very echo of the couplet measure."

Remarks on the Beauties of Poetry, p. 40.

To these rules on the niceties of Versification may perhaps be added a caution of abstaining as much as possible from the too frequent use, and too near assemblage of the hissing consonant S. Our most melodious poet has not always so abstained; witness the well known line;

Soon he sooth'd his soul to pleasure;

Dionysius of Halicarnassus says the Greeks used their letter *sigma* very sparingly; and Athenæus relates that Pindar wrote a whole Ode without once introducing a letter that so much wounded their delicate ears.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

H. CROMWELL, ESQ.

From the Year 1708 to 1711.

LETTER I.

March 18, 1708.

I BELIEVE it was with me when I left the Town, as it is with a great many men when they leave the world, whose loss itself they do not so much regret, as that of their friends whom they leave behind in it. For I do not know one thing for which I can envy London, but for your continuing there. Yet I guess you will expect me to recant this expression, when I tell you that Sappho (by which heathenish name you have christened a very orthodox Lady) did not accompany me into the Country. Well, you have your Lady in the Town still, and I have my Heart in the Country still, which being wholly unemployed as yet, has the more room in it for my friends, and does not want a corner at your service. You have extremely obliged me by your frankness and kindness; and if I have abused it by too much freedom on my part, I hope you will attribute it to

the natural openness of my temper, which hardly knows how to shew Respect, where it feels Affection. I would love my Friend, as my Mistress, without ceremony: and hope a little rough usage sometimes may not be more displeasing to the one, than it is to the other.

If you have any curiosity to know in what manner I live, or rather lose a life, Martial will inform you in one line:

Prandeo, poto, cano, ludo, lego, cœno, quiesco.

Every day with me is literally another yesterday, for it is exactly the same: It has the same business, which is Poetry, and the same pleasure, which is idleness. A man might indeed pass his time much better, but I question if any man could pass it much easier. If you will visit our shades this spring, which I very much desire, you may perhaps instruct me to manage my game more wisely; but at present I am satisfied to trifle away my time any way, rather than let it stick by me; as shop-keepers are glad to be rid of those goods at any rate, which would otherwise always be lying upon their hands.

Sir, if you will favour me [5] sometimes with your letters, it will be a great satisfaction to me on several accounts; and on this in particular, that it will shew me (to my comfort) that even a wise man is sometimes very idle; for so you must needs be when you can find leisure to write to

Your, etc.

[5] All that we can learn of this correspondent of our Author is, that he used to go a hunting in a tie-wig, in the manner of the old courtiers of the age of Louis XIV. in France.

LETTER II.

April 27, 1708.

I HAVE nothing to say to you in this letter; but I was resolved to write to tell you so. Why should not I content myself with so many great Examples of deep Divines, profound Casuists, grave Philosophers, who have written, not letters only, but whole Tomes and voluminous Treatises about nothing? Why should a fellow like me, who all his life does nothing, be ashamed to write nothing; and that to one who has nothing to do but to read it? But perhaps you'll say, the whole world has something to do, something to talk of, something to wish for, something to be employed about: But pray, Sir, cast up the account, put all these somethings together, and what is the sum total but just nothing? I have no more to say, but to desire you to give my service (that is nothing) to your friends, and to believe that I am nothing more than

Your, etc.

Ex nihilo nil fit. Lucr.

LETTER III.

May 10, 1708.

YOU talk of fame and glory, and of the great men of Antiquity: Pray, tell me, what are all your great dead men, but so many little living letters? What a

vast reward is here for all the ink wasted by Writers, and all the blood spilt by Princes? There was in old time one Severus a Roman Emperor. I dare say you never called him by any other name in your life: and yet in his days he was styled Lucius, Septimius, Severus, Pius, Pertinax, Augustus, Parthicus, Adiabenicus, Arabicus, Maximus, and what not? What a prodigious waste of letters has time made! what a number have here dropt off, and left the poor surviving seven unattended! For my own part, four are all I have to take care for: and I'll be judged by you if any man could live in less compass? Well, for the future I'll drown all high thoughts in the Lethe of cowslip-wine; as for Fame, Renown, Reputation, take them, Critics!

> Tradam protervis in Mare *Criticum*
> Ventis.

If ever I seek for Immortality here, may I be damned, for there's not so much danger in a poet's being damned:

> Damnation follows death in other men,
> But your damn'd Poet lives and writes agen.

LETTER IV.

Nov. 1, 1708.

I HAVE been so well satisfied with the country ever since I saw you, that I have not once thought of the Town, or enquired of any one in it besides Mr. Wycherley and yourself. And from him I under-

stand of your journey this summer into Leicestershire; from whence I guess you are returned by this time, to your old apartment in the widow's corner, to your old business of comparing Critics, and reconciling Commentators, and to your old diversions of a losing game at piquet with the ladies, and half a play, or a quarter of a play at the theatre: where you are none of the malicious audience, but the chief of amorous spectators; and for the infirmity of one[6] sense, which there, for the most part, could only serve to disgust you, enjoy the vigour of another, which ravishes you.

[[7] You know, when one sense is suppress,
It but retires into the rest,

according to the poetical, not the learned[8], Dodwell; who has done one thing worthy of eternal memory; wrote two lines in his life that are not nonsense!] So you have the advantage of being entertained with all the beauty of the boxes, without being troubled with any of the dulness of the stage. You are so good a critic, that it is the greatest happiness of the modern Poets that you do not hear their works: And next, that you are not so arrant a critic, as to

[6] His hearing. P.

[7] Omitted by the author in his own edition. P.

[8] Alluding to Mr. Henry Dodwell, the celebrated nonjuror, a man of very great and extensive learning, author of the Dissertations on Cyprian, Irenæus, of the Annals of Dionysius Halicarnassus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Velleius Paterculus, of a curious volume of Camdenian Lectures, and the Greek and Roman Cycles, of a Dissertation on the Paucity of Martyrs in the Primitive Church, and other important subjects; but disgraced himself by maintaining a paradox on the Natural Mortality of the Soul, which was ably confuted by several Divines.

damn them (like the rest) without hearing. But now I talk of those critics, I have good news to tell you concerning myself, for which I expect you should congratulate with me; It is that, beyond all my expectations, and far above my demerits, I have been most mercifully reprieved by the sovereign power of Jacob Tonson, from being brought forth to public punishment; and respited from time to time from the hands of those barbarous executioners of the Muses, whom I was just now speaking of. It often happens, that guilty Poets like other guilty Criminals when once they are known and proclaimed, deliver themselves into the hands of justice, only to prevent others from doing it more to their disadvantage, and not out of any ambition to spread their fame, by being executed in the face of the world, which is a fame but of short continuance. That poet were a happy man who could but obtain a grant to preserve his ninety-nine years; for those names very rarely last so many days, which are planted either in Jacob Tonson's, or the Ordinary of Newgate's Miscellanies.

I have an hundred things to say to you, which shall be deferred till I have the happiness of seeing you in town, for the season now draws on, that invites every body thither. Some of them I had communicated to you by letters before this, if I had not been uncertain where you passed your time the last season: So much fine weather, I doubt not, has given you all the pleasure you could desire from the country, and your own thoughts the best company in it. But nothing could allure Mr. Wycherley to our

forest: he continued (as you told me long since he would) an obstinate lover of the town, in spite of friendship and fair weather. Therefore henceforward, to all those considerable qualities I know you possessed of, I shall add that of prophecy. But I still believe Mr. Wycherley's intentions were good, and am satisfied that he promises nothing, but with a real design to perform it: How much soever his other excellent qualities are above my imitation, his sincerity, I hope, is not; and it is with the utmost that I am,

Sir, etc.

LETTER V.

Jan. 22, 1708-9.

I HAD sent you the inclosed papers[9] before this time, but that I intended to have brought them myself, and afterwards could find no opportunity of sending them without suspicion of their miscarrying, not that they are of the least value, but for fear somebody might be foolish enough to imagine them so, and inquisitive enough to discover those faults which I (by your help) would correct. I therefore beg the favour of you to let them go no farther than your chamber, and to be very free of your remarks in the

[9] This was a translation of the first book of Statius, done when the Author was but fourteen years old, as appears by an advertisement before the first edition of it in a miscellany published by B. Lintot. 8vo. 1711. P.

margins, not only in regard to the accuracy, but to the fidelity of the translation; which I have not had time to compare with its original. And I desire you to be the more severe, as it is much more criminal for me to make another speak nonsense than to do it in my own proper person. For your better help in comparing, it may be fit to tell you, that this is not an entire version of the first book. There is an omission from the 168th line—*Jam murmura serpunt Plebis Agenoreæ*—to the 312th—*Interea patriis olim vagus exul ab oris*—(between these[1] two Statius has a description of the council of the Gods, and a speech of Jupiter; which contain a peculiar beauty and majesty, and were left out for no other reason, but because the consequence of this machine appears not till the second book.) The translation goes on from thence to the words *Hic vero ambobus rabiem fortuna cruentam*, where there is an odd account of a battle at fifty-cuffs between the two Princes on a very slight occasion, and at a time when, one would think, the fatigue of their journey, in so tempestuous a night, might have rendered them very unfit for such a scuffle. This I had actually translated, but was very ill satisfied with it, even in my own words, to which an author cannot but be partial enough of conscience; it was therefore omitted in this copy, which goes on above eighty lines farther, at the words—*Hic primum lustrare oculis*, etc.—to the end of the book.

[1] These he since translated, and they are extant in the printed version. P.

You will find, I doubt not, that Statius[2] was none of the discreetest Poets, though he was the best versifier next Virgil: In the very beginning he unluckily betrays his ignorance in the rules of Poetry (which Horace had already taught the Romans) when he asks his Muse where to begin his Thebaid, and seems to doubt whether it should not be *ab ovo Ledæo.* When he comes to the scene of his Poem, and the prize in dispute between the brothers, he gives us a very mean opinion of it——*Pugna est de paupere regno*——Very different from the conduct of his master Virgil, who at the entrance of his poem informs his reader of the greatness of its subjects—*Tantæ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.* [Bossu on Epic Poetry.] There are innumerable little faults in him, among which I cannot but take notice of one in this book, where, speaking of the implacable hatred of the brothers, he says, *The whole world would be too small a prize to repay so much impiety.*

> Quid si peteretur crimine tanto
> Limes uterque poli, quem Sol emissus Eoo
> Cardine, quem porta vergens prospectat Ibera?

This was pretty well, one would think, already; but he goes on.

> Quasque procul terras obliquo sidere tangit
> Avius, aut Borea gelidas, madidive tepentes
> Igne Noti?

[2] Statius is one instance among a thousand, that a man may possess genius and imagination, and at the same time want taste and judgment. Claudian is a far better writer, though his verses have more monotony than the numbers of Statius. It is remarkable that Gray's first attempt in English verse, was a translation

After all this, what could a Poet think of but Heaven itself for the prize? But what follows is astonishing.

Quid si Tyriæ Phrygiæve sub unum
Convectentur opes?

I do not remember to have met with so great a fall in any ancient author whatsoever. I should not have insisted so much on the faults of this Poet[3], if I did not hope you would take the same freedom with, and revenge it upon, his Translator. I shall be extremely glad if the reading this can be any amusement to you, the rather because I had the dissatisfaction to hear you have been confined to your chamber by an illness, which, I fear, was as troublesome a companion as I have sometimes been in the same place; where, if ever you found any pleasure in my company, it must surely have been that which most men take in observing the faults and follies of another; a pleasure, which, you see, I take care to give you even in my absence.

If you will oblige me at your leisure with the confirmation of your recovery, under your own hand, it will be extremely grateful to me, for next to the pleasure of seeing my friends, is that I take in hearing from them; and in this particular I am beyond all acknowledgments obliged to our friend Mr. Wycherley. I know I need no apology to you for

of a passage in Statius. 1736. See Memoirs, p. 9. 4to. A translation of Statius, by several hands, was intended to be published. Harte translated the sixth book, and Pitt the third.

[3] His wild and gigantic images, and pompous diction, so much resembled the old romances, that he was the favourite poet of the middle ages.

speaking of him, whose example as I am proud of following in all things, so in nothing more than in professing myself, like him,

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

March 7, 1709.

You had long before this time been troubled with a letter from me, but that I deferred it till I could send you either the Miscellany[4], or my continuation of the version of Statius. The first I imagined you might have had before now, but since the contrary has happened, you may draw this moral from it, That authors in general are more ready to write nonsense than booksellers are to publish it. I had I know not what extraordinary flux of rhyme upon me for three days together, in which time all the verses you see added, have been written; which I tell you that you may more freely be severe upon them. 'Tis a mercy I do not assault you with a number of original Sonnets and Epigrams, which our modern bards put forth in the spring-time, in as great abundance, as trees do blossoms, a very few whereof ever come to be fruit, and please no longer than just in their birth. They make no less haste to bring their flowers of wit to the press, than gardeners to bring

[4] Jacob Tonson's sixth volume of Poetical Miscellanies, in which Mr. Pope's Pastorals, and some versions of Homer and Chaucer, were first printed. P.

their other flowers to the market, which if they can't get off their hands in the morning, are sure to die before night. Thus the same reason that furnishes Covent-garden with those nosegays you so delight in, supplies the *Muses' Mercury* and *British Apollo* (not to say *Jacob's* Miscellanies) with verses. And it is the happiness of this age that the modern invention of printing poems for pence a-piece, has brought the nosegays of Parnassus to bear the same price; whereby the public-spirited Mr. Henry Hills of Black-friars has been the cause of great ease and singular comfort to all the learned, who never overbounding in transitory coin should not be discontented (methinks) even though poems were disturbed gratis about the streets, like Bunyan's sermons and other pious treatises, usually published in a like volume and character.

The time now drawing nigh, when you use with Sappho to cross the water in an evening to Spring-garden, I hope you will have a fair opportunity of ravishing her:——I mean only (as Oldfox in the Plain-dealer says) through the ear, with your well-penned verses. I wish you all the pleasures which the season and the nymph can afford; the best company, the best coffee, and the best news you can desire; and what more to wish you than this, I do not know; unless it be a great deal of patience to read and examine the verses I send you: I promise you in return a great deal of deference to your judgment, and an extraordinary obedience to your sentiments for the future (to which, you know, I have been sometimes a little refractory). If you will please to

begin where you left off last, and mark the margins as you have done in the pages immediately before, (which you will find corrected to your sense since your last perusal,) you will extremely oblige me, and improve my translation. Besides those places which may deviate from the sense of the author, it would be very kind in you to observe any deficiencies in the diction or numbers. The Hiatus in particular I would avoid as much as possible, to which you are certainly in the right to be a professed enemy; though, I confess, I could not think it possible at all times to be avoided by any writer, till I found by reading Malherbe[5] lately, that there is scarce any throughout his poems. I thought your observation true enough to be passed into a rule, but not a rule without exceptions, nor that ever it had been reduced to practice: But this example of one of the most correct and best of their Poets has undeceived me, and confirms your opinion very strongly, and much more than Mr. Dryden's authority, who, though he made it a rule, seldom observed it.

Your, etc.

[5] The first *correct* Poet of France; to whom their language had inestimable obligations. The notes of Menage on the Works of Malherbe, abound in many curious critical remarks and digressions. Ronsard had a more vigorous imagination than Malherbe, but not so true a taste and judgment; his style is harsh, and full of barbarisms and foreign idioms.

LETTER VII.

June 10, 1709.

I HAVE received part of the version of Statius, and return you my thanks for your remarks, which I think to be just, except where you cry out (like one in Horace's Art of Poetry) *pulcre, bene, recte!* There I have some fears you are often, if not always, in the wrong.

One of your objections, namely on that passage,

> The rest revolving years shall ripen into fate,

may be well grounded, in relation to its not being the exact sense of the words ——[6] *Certo reliqua ordine ducam.* But the duration of the Action of Statius's poem may as well be excepted against, as many things besides in him; (which I wonder Bossu[7] has not observed;) for instead of confining his narration to *one year*, it is manifestly exceeded in the very first two books; The narration begins with Œdipus's prayer to the Fury to promote discord betwixt his sons; afterwards the Poet expressly describes their entering into the agreement of reigning a year by turns[8]; and Polynices takes his flight from Thebes

[6] See the first book of Statius, v. 302. P.

[7] Bossu did not write a critique upon Statius, but only used him, as he did other poets, occasionally, for an example. So that it is no wonder there should be faults and beauties in Statius which he did not take notice of. W.

[8] It is rather strange that our Poet should make no mention of the Phœnissæ of Euripides, if indeed he had ever read that Tragedy.

on his brother's refusal to resign the throne. All this is in the first book; in the next Tydeus is sent ambassador to Eteocles, and demands his resignation in these terms,

Astriferum velox jam circulus orbem
Torsit, et amissæ redierunt montibus umbræ,
Ex quo frater inops, ignota per oppida tristes
Exul agit casus.

But Bossu himself is mistaken in one particular, relating to the commencement of the action; saying, in book ii. cap. 8. that Statius opens with Europa's Rape, whereas the Poet at most olny deliberates whether he should or not[9].

Unde jubetis
Ire, Deæ? gentisne canam primordia diræ,
Sidonios raptus? *etc.*

but then expressly passes all this with a *longa retro series*—and says,

limes mihi carminis esto
Œdipodæ confusa domus.

Indeed there are numberless particulars blameworthy in our author, which I have tried to soften in the version:

dubiamque jugo fragor impulit Œten
In latus, et geminis vix fluctibus obstitit Isthmus,

is most extravagantly hyperbolical: Nor did I ever read a greater piece of tautology than

Vacua cum *solus* in aula
Respiceres *jus omne tuum, cunctosque minores,*
Et nusquam *par* stare *caput.*

[9] That was the same to Bossu's purpose; which was only to shew, that there were epic Poets so ignorant, or so negligent for composition, as not to know where their subject should begin. W.

In the journey of Polynices is some geographical error,

In mediis audit duo litora campis

could hardly be; for the Isthmus of Corinth is full five miles over: And *caligantes abrupto sole Mycenas* is not consistent with what he tells us, in lib. iv. lin. 305. " that those of Mycenæ came not to the war at this time, because theywere then in confusion by the divisions of the brothers, Atreus and Thyestes." Now from the raising the Greek army against Thebes, back to the time of this journey of Polynices, is (according to Statius's own account) three years.

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

July 17, 1709.

THE morning after I parted from you, I found myself (as I had prophesied) all alone, in an uneasy Stage-coach; a doleful change from that agreeable company I enjoyed the night before! without the least hope of entertainment but from my last resource in such cases, a Book. I then began to enter into acquaintance with your Moralists, and had just received from them some cold consolation for the inconveniences of this life, and the uncertainty of human affairs; when I perceived my vehicle to stop, and heard from the side of it the dreadful news of a sick woman preparing to enter it. 'Tis not easy

to guess at my mortification, but being so well fortified with philosophy, I stood resigned with a stoical constancy to endure the worst of evils, a sick woman. I was indeed a little comforted to find by her voice and dress, that she was young and a gentlewoman; but no sooner was her hood removed, but I saw one of the finest faces I ever beheld, and, to increase my surprise, heard her salute me by my name. I never had more reason to accuse nature for making me short-sighted than now, when I could not recollect I had ever seen those fair eyes which knew me so well, and was utterly at a loss how to address myself; till with a great deal of simplicity and innocence she let me know (even before I discovered my ignorance) that she was the daughter of one in our neighbourhood, lately married, who having been consulting her physicians in town, was returning into the country, to try what good air and a husband could do to recover her. My father, you must know, has sometimes recommended the study of physic to me, but I never had any ambition to be a doctor till this instant. I ventured to prescribe some fruit (which I happened to have in the coach) which being forbidden her by her doctors, she had the more inclination to. In short, I tempted, and she eat; nor was I more like the Devil than she like Eve. Having the good success of the aforesaid tempter before my eyes, I put on the gallantry of the old serpent, and in spite of my evil form accosted her with all the gaiety I was master of; which had so good effect, that in less than an hour she grew pleasant, her colour turned, and she was pleased to

say my prescription had wrought an immediate cure. In a word, I had the pleasantest journey imaginable.

Thus far (methinks) my letter has something of the air of a romance, though it be true. But I hope you will look on what follows as the greatest of truths, that I think myself extremely obliged by you in all points; especially for your kind and honourable information and advice in a matter of the utmost concern to me, which I shall ever acknowledge as the highest proof at once of your friendship, justice, and sincerity. At the same time be assured, that Gentleman[1] we spoke of, shall never by any alteration in me discover my knowledge of his mistake; the hearty forgiving of which is the only kind of return I can possibly make him for so many favours: And I may derive this pleasure at least from it, that whereas I must otherwise have been a little uneasy to know my incapacity of returning his obligations, I may now, by bearing his frailty, exercise my gratitude and friendship more than himself either is, or perhaps ever will be, sensible of.

> Ille meos, primus qui me sibi junxit, amores
> Abstulit; ille habeat secum, servetque sepulcro!

[1] Mr. Wycherley.—From his last letters to Mr. Pope the reader may perceive something of a growing coldness and disgust, apparently proceeding from the liberties his young friend had taken with his versification and composition. Little virtue, and an excessive affectation of being witty, joined to the common infirmities of old age, jealousy and loss of memory, are sufficient to account for the instability of his friendship, though we were not to suppose (what was the fact) that our Poet had ill offices done him by those who were generally about the old man. *For* (as Mr. Pope rightly observes) *each ill Author is as bad a Friend.* W.

But in one thing, I must confess you have yourself obliged me more than any man, which is, that you have shewed me many of my faults, to which as you are the more an implacable enemy, so much the more you are a kind friend to me. I could be proud in revenge, to find a few slips in your verses, which I read in London, and since in the country, with more application and pleasure: The thoughts are very just, and you are sure not to let them suffer by the versification. If you would oblige me with the trust of any thing of yours, I should be glad to execute any commissions you would give me concerning them. I am here so perfectly at leisure, that nothing would be so agreeable an entertainment to me; but if you will not afford me that, do not deny me at least the satisfaction of your letters as long as we are absent, if you would not have him very unhappy, who is very sincerely Your, etc.

Having a vacant space here, I will fill it with a short Ode on Solitude, which I found yesterday by great accident, and which I find by the date, was written when I was not twelve years old; that you may perceive how long I continued in my passion for a rural life, and in the same employments of it.

Happy the man[2], whose wish and care
A few paternal acres bound,
Content to breathe his native air
In his own ground.

[2] The contemplating, reflecting, philosophic turn of mind, for which our Author was afterward so eminent, is here very conspicuous. And the purity and correctness of style are extraordinary in a youth of only twelve years old. But his verses on *Silence* are still more extraordinary.

Whose herds with milk, whose fields with bread,
Whose flocks supply him with attire,
Whose trees in summer yield him shade,
In winter, fire.

Blest who can unconcern'dly find
Hours, days, and years, slide soft away,
In health of body, peace of mind,
Quiet by day.

Sound sleep by night; study and ease,
Together mix'd; sweet recreation,
And innocence, which most does please,
With meditation.

Thus let me live, unseen, unknown,
Thus unlamented let me die,
Steal from the world, and not a stone
Tell where I lie.

LETTER IX.

Aug. 19, 1709.

If I were to write to you as often as I think of you, my letters would be as bad as a rent-charge; but though the one be but too little for your good-nature, the other would be too much for your quiet, which is one blessing good-nature should indispensably receive from mankind, in return for those many it gives. I have been informed of late, how much I am indebted to that quality of yours, in speaking well of me in my absence; the only thing by which you prove yourself no wit nor critic: though indeed I have often thought, that a friend will show just as much indulgence (and no more) to my faults when I am absent, as he does severity to them when I am

present. To be very frank with you, Sir, I must own, that where I received so much civility at first, I could hardly have expected so much sincerity afterwards. But now I have only to wish, that the last were but equal to the first, and that as you have omitted nothing to oblige me, so you would omit nothing to improve me.

I caused an acquaintance of mine to enquire twice of your welfare, by whom I have been informed, that you have left your speculative angle in the Widow's Coffee-house, and bidding adieu for some time to all the Rehearsals, Reviews, Gazettes, etc. have marched off into Lincolnshire. Thus I find you vary your life in the Scene at least, though not in the Action; for though life for the most part, like an old play, be still the same, yet now and then a new scene may make it more entertaining. As for myself, I would not have my life a very regular play, let it be a good[3] merry farce, a G—d's name, and a fig for the critical unities! For the generality of men, a true modern life is like a true modern play, neither tragedy, comedy, nor farce, nor one nor all of these; every actor is much better known by his having the same face, than by keeping the same character: for we change our minds as often as they can their parts, and who was yesterday Cæsar, is this day Sir John Daw. So that one might ask the same question of a modern life that Rich did of a modern play; "Pray do me the favour, Sir, to inform, me; is this your Tragedy or your Comedy?"

[3] *Tolerable farce* in the Author's own Edit. *a God's name* omitted there. W.

I have dwelt the longer upon this, because I persuade myself it might be useful, at a time when we have no theatre, to divert ourselves at this great one. Here is a glorious standing comedy of Fools, at which every man is heartily merry, and thinks himself an unconcerned spectator. This (to our singular comfort) neither my Lord Chamberlain, nor the Queen herself can ever shut up or silence.—[4] While that of Drury (alas!) lies desolate, in the profoundest peace: and the melancholy prospect of the nymphs yet lingering about its beloved avenues, appears no less moving than that of the Trojan dames lamenting over their ruined Ilium! What can they hope, dispossessed of their ancient seats, but to serve as captives to the insulted victors of the Hay-market? The afflicted subjects of France do not, in our Postman, so grievously deplore the obstinacy of their arbitrary monarch, as these perishing people of Drury the obdurate heart of that Pharaoh, Rich, who, like him, disdains all proposals of peace[5] and accommodation. Several libels have been secretly affixed to the great gates of his imperial palace in Bridges-street; and a memorial, representing the distresses of these persons, has been accidentally dropt (as we are credibly informed by a person of quality) out of his first minister the chief box-keeper's pocket, at a late conference of the said person of quality, and others, on

[4] What follows to the end of this Letter, is omitted in the Author's own Edit. W.

[5] A full account of these Theatrical squabbles may be seen in Cibber's entertaining Life, and in Davies' Dramatic Miscellanies.

the part of the Confederates, and his Theatrical Majesty on his own part. Of this you may expect a copy as soon as it shall be transmitted to us from a good hand. As for the late Congress, it is here reported, that it has not been wholly ineffectual; but this wants confirmation; yet we cannot but hope the concurring prayers and tears of so many wretched ladies may induce this haughty prince to reason.

I am, etc.

LETTER X.

Oct. 19, 1709.

I MAY truly say I am more obliged to you this summer than to any of my acquaintance, for had it not been for the two kind letters you sent me, I had been perfectly *oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis.* The only companions I had were those Muses, of whom Tully says, *Adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur:* which indeed is as much as ever I expected from them: for the Muses, if you take them as companions, are very pleasant and agreeable, but whoever should be forced to live or depend upon them, would find himself in a very bad condition. That Quiet, which Cowley calls the *Companion of Obscurity*, was not wanting to me, unless it was interrupted by those fears you so justly guess I had for our friend's welfare. 'Tis

extremely kind in you to tell me the news you heard of him, and you have delivered me from more anxiety than he imagines me capable of on his account, as I am convinced by his long silence. However, the love of some things rewards itself, as of virtue, and of Mr. Wycherley. I am surprised at the danger you tell me he has been in, and must agree with you, that our nation would have lost in him as much wit and probity, as would have remained (for ought I know) in the rest of it. My concern for his friendship will excuse me (since I know you honour him so much, and since you know I love him above all men) if I vent part of my uneasiness to you, and tell you, that there has not been wanting one, to insinuate malicious untruths of me to Mr. Wycherley, which, I fear, may have had some effect upon him. If so, he will have a greater punishment for his credulity than I could wish him, in that fellow's acquaintance. The loss of a faithful creature is something, though of ever so contemptible a one; and if I were to change my dog for such a man as the aforesaid, I should think my dog undervalued: who follows me about as constantly here in the country, as I was used to do Mr. Wycherley in the town.

Now I talk of my dog, that I may not treat of a worse subject, which my spleen tempts me to, I will give you some account of him; a thing not wholly unprecedented, since Montaigne (to whom I am but a dog in comparison) has done the same thing of his cat. *Dic mihi quid melius desidiosus agam?* You are to know then, that as 'tis likeness begets affection, so my favourite dog is a little one, a lean one, and

none of the finest shaped. He is not much a spaniel in his fawning, but has (what might be worth any man's while to imitate him in) a dumb surly sort of kindness, that rather shews itself when he thinks me ill-used by others, than when we walk quietly and peaceably by ourselves. If it be the chief point of friendship to comply with a friend's motions and inclinations, he possesses this in an eminent degree; he lies down when I sit, and walks when I walk, which is more than many good friends can pretend to, witness our walk a year ago in St. James's Park. ——Histories are more full of examples of the fidelity of dogs than of friends, but I will not insist upon many of them, because it is possible some may be almost as fabulous as those of Pylades and Orestes, etc. I will only say for the honour of dogs, that the two most ancient and esteemable books, sacred and prophane, extant, (viz. the Scripture and Homer,) have shewn a particular regard to these animals. That of Toby is the more remarkable, because there seemed no manner of reason to take notice of the dog, besides the great humanity of the author. Homer's account of Ulysses's dog Argus is the most pathetic imaginable, all the circumstances considered, and an excellent proof of the old bard's good-nature. Ulysses had left him at Ithaca when he embarked for Troy, and found him at his return after twenty years; (which by the way is not unnatural, as some critics have said, since I remember the dam of my dog was twenty-two years old when she died: may the omen of longevity prove fortunate to her successors). You shall have it in verse:

ARGUS.

When wise Ulysses, from his native coast
Long kept by wars, and long by tempests tost,
Arriv'd at last, poor, old, disguis'd, alone,
To all his friends, and even his Queen unknown:
Chang'd as he was, with age, and toils, and cares,
Furrow'd his reverend face, and white his hairs,
In his own palace forc'd to ask his bread,
Scorn'd by those slaves his former bounty fed,
Forgot of all his own domestic crew;
The faithful dog alone his rightful master knew!
Unfed, unhous'd, neglected, on the clay,
Like an old servant now cashier'd, he lay;
Touch'd with resentment of ungrateful man,
And longing to behold his ancient Lord again.
Him when he saw[6]—he rose, and crawl'd to meet,
('Twas all he cou'd,) and fawn'd, and kiss'd his feet,
Seiz'd with dumb joy—then falling by his side,
Own'd his returning Lord, look'd up, and died!

Plutarch relating how the Athenians were obliged to abandon Athens in the time of Themistocles, steps back again out of the way of his history, purely to describe the lamentable cries and howlings of the poor dogs they left behind. He makes mention of one that followed his master across the Sea to Salamis, where he died, and was honoured with a tomb by the Athenian, who gave the name of the Dog's Grave to that part of the island where he was buried. This respect to a dog in the most polite people in the world, is very observable. A modern instance

I know not sweeter lines in our language than these four; Prior says well in Solomon, b. i.

And dying licks his long-lov'd master's feet.

Which my friend Dobson admirably translated,

Et lambit carum lingua moriente magistrum.

of gratitude to a dog (though we have few such) is, that the chief order of Denmark (now injuriously called the order of the Elephant) was instituted in memory of the fidelity of a dog named Wild-brat, to one of their Kings who had been deserted by his subjects; he gave his Order this motto, or to this effect, (which still remains,) *Wild-brat was faithful.* Sir William Trumbull has told me a story[7], which he heard from one that was present: King Charles I. being with some of his court during his troubles, a discourse arose what sort of dogs deserved pre-eminence, and it being on all hands agreed to belong either to the spaniel or grey-hound, the king gave his opinion on the part of the grey-hound, because (said he) it has all the good-nature of the other, without fawning. A good piece of satire upon his courtiers, with which I will conclude my discourse of dogs. Call me a cynic, or what you please, in revenge for all this impertinence, I will be contented; provided you will but believe me, when I say a bold word for a Christian, that, of all dogs, you will find none more faithful than

Your, etc.

LETTER XI.

April 10, 1710.

I HAD written to you sooner, but that I made some scruple of sending profane things to you in Holy

[7] Sir Philip Warwick tells us this story in his Memoirs. W.

Week. Besides, our family would have been scandalized to see me write, who take it for granted I write nothing but ungodly verses. I assure you I am looked upon in the neighbourhood for a very well disposed person, no great Hunter indeed, but a great admirer of the noble sport, and only unhappy in my want of constitution for that, and Drinking. They all say 'tis a pity I am so sickly, and I think 'tis pity they are so healthy. But I say nothing that may destroy their good opinion of me: I have not quoted one Latin Author since I came down, but have learned without book a song of Mr. Thomas Durfey's, who is your only Poet of tolerable reputation in this country. He makes all the merriment in our entertainments, and but for him, there would be so miserable a dearth of catches, that, I fear, they would put either the Parson or me upon making some for 'em. Any man, of any quality, is heartily welcome to the best toping table of our gentry, who can roar out some Rhapsodies of his works; so that in the same manner as it was said of Homer to his detractors, What? dares any man speak against him who has given so many men to *eat?* (meaning the Rhapsodists who lived by repeating his verses,) thus may it be said of Mr. Durfey to his detractors; Dares any one despise him who has made so many men *drink?* Alas, Sir! this is a glory which neither you nor I must ever pretend to. Neither you with your Ovid, nor I with my Statius, can amuse a board of justices and extraordinary 'squires, or gain one hum of approbation, or laugh of admiration. These Things (they would say) are too studious, they may do well enough with

such as love reading, but give us your ancient Poet Mr. Durfey[8]? 'Tis mortifying enough, it must be confessed; but however, let us proceed in the way that nature has directed us——*Multi multa scient, sed nemo omnia*, as it is said in the almanack. Let us communicate our works for our mutual comfort: send me elegies, and you shall not want heroics. At present I have only these arguments in prose to the Thebaid, which you claim by promise, as I do your Translation of *Pars me Sulmo tenet*,—and the *Ring*; the rest I hope for as soon as you can conveniently transcribe them, and whatsoever orders you are pleased to give me shall be punctually obeyed by

Your, etc.

LETTER XII.

May 10, 1710.

I HAD not so long omitted to express my acknowledgments to you for so much good-nature and friendship as you lately shewed me; but that I am but just returned to my own hermitage, from Mr. C*'s, who has done me so many favours, that I am almost

[8] He was every summer invited to a fishing-party at Mr. *Jones's* of Ramsbury, a man of considerable property in Wiltshire. *Harte* told me his friend *Fenton* alluded to this visit in his elegant Epistle to *Lambard*:

> By long experience, *Durfey* may, no doubt,
> Insnare a gudgeon, or sometimes a trout;
> Yet *Dryden* once exclaim'd, in partial spite,
> *He fish!* because the man attempts to write.

inclined to think my friends infect one another, and that your conversation with him has made him as obliging to me as yourself. I can assure you, he has a sincere respect for you, and this, I believe, he has partly contracted from me, who am too full of you not to overflow upon those I converse with. But I must now be contented to converse only with the dead of this world, that is to say, the dull and obscure, every way obscure, in their intellects as well as their persons: or else have recourse to the living dead, the old authors with whom you are so well acquainted, even from Virgil down to Aulus Gellius, whom I do not think a critic by any means to be compared to Mr. Dennis: and I must declare positively to you, that I will persist in this opinion, till you become a little more civil to Atticus. Who could have imagined, that he, who had escaped all the misfortunes of his time, unhurt even by the proscriptions of Antony and Augustus, should in these days find an enemy more severe and barbarous than those tyrants? and that enemy the gentlest too, the best natured of mortals, Mr. Cromwell, whom I must in this compare once more to Augustus; who seemed not more unlike himself in the severity of one part of his life and the clemency of the other, than you. I leave you to reflect on this, and hope that time (which mollifies rocks, and of stiff things makes limber) will turn a resolute critic to a gentle reader; and instead of this positive, tremendous new-fashioned Mr. Cromwell, restore unto us our old acquaintance, the soft, beneficent, and courteous Mr. Cromwell.

I expect much, towards the civilizing of you in

your critical capacity, from the innocent air and tranquillity of our Forest, when you do me the favour to visit it. In the mean time, it would do well by way of preparative, if you would duly and constantly every morning read over a pastoral of Theocritus or Virgil; and let the lady Isabella put your Macrobius and Aulus Gellius somewhere out of your way, for a month or so. Who knows but travelling and long airing in an open field, may contribute more successfully to the cooling a critic's severity, than it did to the assuaging of Mr. Cheek's anger of old? In these fields, you will be secure of finding no enemy, but the most faithful and affectionate of your friends, etc.

LETTER XIII.

May 17, 1710.

After I had recovered from a dangerous illness, which was first contracted in town about a fortnight after my coming hither, I troubled you with a letter and[9] paper inclosed which you had been so obliging as to desire a sight of when last I saw you, promising me in return some translations of yours from Ovid. Since when I have not had a syllable from your hands, so that 'tis to be feared that though I have escaped death, I have not oblivion. I should at least have expected you to have finished that elegy upon

[9] Verses on Silence, in imitation of the Earl of Rochester's poem on Nothing; done at fourteen years old. P.

me, which you told me you was upon the point of beginning when I was sick in London; if you will but do so much for me first, I will give you leave to forget me afterward; and for my own part will die at discretion, and at my leisure. But I fear I must be forced, like many learned authors, to write my own epitaph, if I would be remembered at all. Monsieur de la Fontaine's would fit me to a hair, but it is a kind of sacrilege (do you think it is not?) to steal epitaphs. In my present living dead condition nothing would be properer than *Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis*, but that unluckily I can't forget my friends, and the civilities I received from yourself, and some others. They say indeed 'tis one quality of generous minds to forget the obligation they have conferred, and perhaps too it may be so to forget those on whom they conferred 'em: then indeed I must be forgotten to all intents and purposes! I am, it must be owned, dead in a natural capacity, according to Mr. Bickerstaff; dead in a poetical capacity, as a damned author; and dead in a civil capacity, as a useless member of the Commonwealth. But reflect, dear Sir, what melancholy effects may ensue, if dead men are not civil to one another! If he who has nothing to do himself will not comfort and support another in his idleness: if those who are to die themselves, will not now and then pay the charity of visiting a tomb and a dead friend, and strowing a few flowers over him: in the shades where I am, the inhabitants have a mutual compassion for each other; being all alike Inanes; we saunter to one another's habitations, and daily assist each other in

doing nothing at all. This I mention for your edification and example, that all alive as you are, you may not sometimes disdain—*desipere in loco*. Though you are no Papist, and have not so much regard to the dead as to address yourself to them, (which I plainly perceive by your silence,) yet I hope you are not one of those heterodox, who hold them to be totally insensible of the good offices and kind wishes of their living friends, and to be in a dull state of sleep without one dream of those they left behind them. If you are, let this letter convince you to the contrary, which assures you, I am still, though in a state of separation, Your, etc.

P. S. This letter of deaths, puts me in mind of poor Mr. Betterton's[1]: over whom I would have this

[1] This excellent man, and excellent actor, hastened his death by repelling a fit of the gout, which he did to enable himself to act, for his own benefit, the part of *Melantius*, in the *Maid's* Tragedy. This was on the 25th of April 1710; and though he performed this his favourite part with great spirit, yet the distemper seized his head, and he died on the 28th of May following. The best paper that Steele wrote in the Tatler, No. 167, contains an account of his death, and the splendid ceremony of his interment in Westminster Abbey. Voltaire speaks in high terms of the good sense of the English in paying such honours to deceased actors; and seriously animadverts on his countrymen, for their bigoted and illiberal practice of even denying them Christian burial. Mr. Garrick merited, and obtained, the same funeral honours, and was followed to Westminster Abbey by a great concourse of those friends and spectators, whom he had so often moved and delighted. An old frequenter of the theatre informed me, that the last time Betterton appeared on the stage, the curiosity of the public was so much excited, that many spectators got into the playhouse by nine o'clock in the morning, and carried with them provisions for the day.

sentence of Tully for an epitaph, which will serve him as well in his Moral, as his Theatrical capacity.

Vitæ bene actæ jucundissima est recordatio.

LETTER XIV.

June 24, 1710.

'Tis very natural for a young friend, and a young lover, to think the persons they love have nothing to do but to please them; when perhaps they, for their parts, had twenty other engagements before. This was my case when I wondered I did not hear from you; but I no sooner received your short letter, but I forgot your long silence: and so many fine things as you said of me could not but have wrought a cure on my own sickness, if it had not been of the nature of that which is deaf to the voice of the charmer. 'Twas impossible you could have better timed your compliment on my philosophy; it was certainly properest to commend me for it just when I most needed it, and when I could be least proud of it; that is, when I was in pain. 'Tis not easy to express what an exaltation it gave to my spirits, above all the cordials of my doctor; and 'tis no compliment to tell you, that your compliments were sweeter than the sweetest of his juleps and syrups. But if you will not believe so much,

Pour le moins, votre compliment
M'a soulagé dans ce moment;
Et des qu'on me l'est venu faire
J'ai chassé mon apoticaire,
Et renvoyé mon lavement.

Nevertheless I would not have you entirely lay aside the thoughts of my epitaph, any more than I do those of the probability of my becoming (ere long) the subject of one. For death has of late been very familiar with some of my size: I am told my Lord Lumley and Mr. Litton are gone before me; and though I may now, without vanity, esteem myself the least thing like a man in England, yet I can't but be sorry, two heroes of such a make should die inglorious in their beds; when it had been a fate more worthy our size, had they met with theirs from an irruption of cranes, or other warlike animals, those ancient enemies to our pygmæan ancestors! You of a superior species little regard what befals us *homunciones sesquipedales;* however, you have no reason to be so unconcerned, since all physicians agree there is no greater sign of a plague among men, than a mortality among frogs. I was the other day in company with a lady, who rallied my person so much, as to cause a total subversion of my countenance: some days after, to be revenged on her, I presented her, among other company, the following Rondeau on that occasion, which I desire you to show Sappho.

You know where you did despise
(T'other day) my little eyes,
Little legs, and little thighs,
And some things of little size,
You know where.

You, 'tis true, have fine black eyes,
Taper legs, and tempting thighs,
Yet what more than all we prize
Is a thing of little size,
You know where.

This sort of writing called the Rondeau is what I never knew practised in our nation, and, I verily believe, it was not in use with the Greeks or Romans, neither Macrobius nor Hyginus taking the least notice of it. 'Tis to be observed, that the vulgar spelling and pronouncing it round O, is a manifest corruption, and by no means to be allowed of by critics. Some may mistakenly imagine that it was a sort of Rondeau which the Gallic soldiers[a] sung in Cæsar's triumph

[a] From this Song of the Gallic Soldiers, I will take occasion to observe, that we have several sorts of measures commonly used in our English versification, which exactly correspond to many that are used by the Greeks and Romans; of which the following are a specimen:

What we call an *Alexandrine* verse in English, is perfectly like a pure Iambic verse in Greek or Latin;

Deĕp īn | thĕ gloō | mў Cāve | thĕ pēn | sivĕ sāge | rĕclīn'd –

Πĕπῡσ | μĕνῆ | μĕν ῶς | ἄπēι | κἄσᾱι | πἄρεῑ | —

Săbī | nă quā | lĭs aūt | pĕrūs | tă sō | lĭbūs | —

Our verse of four feet consists of four Iambics, like the following diameter Iambic verse in Horace:

Rĕmōte | frŏm cī | tiĕs līv'd | ă swāin | —
Sŏlū | tŭs ōm | ni fœ̄ | norē |

In which measure also many hymns for the Church were written, by those elegant Latin Poets that adorned Italy at the time of the revival of literature; as the following of Ant. Flaminus;

Jam noctis umbras Lucifer,
Almæ diei nuntius,
Terra poloque dimovet—

One of the most harmonious measures in our language, bears a most minute resemblance to the Greek Trochaic measure; as will appear by reading the following passages of Gray and Euripides together; and compared also with the words;

Gallias Cæsar subegit——

over Gaul—*Gallias Cæsar subegit*, etc. as it is recorded by Suetonius in Julio, and so derive its original from the ancient Gauls to the modern French: but this is erroneous; the words there not being ranged according to the laws of the Rondeau, as laid

Whēre eăch | ōld pŏ | ētĭc | moūntaĭn |
Inspĭ | rătiŏn | breāth'd ă | round;
Ev'rў | shāde ănd | hāllŏw'd | foūntăin
Mūrmŭr'd | deēp ă | sōlĕmn | sound!

Οῑσθᾰ | νῡν ᾰ | μοῑ γĕ | νῑσθω;
Σōν τŏ | σῆμᾱι | νῑιν τŏ | δε
Δῑσμᾰ | τοῖς ξĕ | νοῑσῐ | πρōσθĕς—
Πōι δĕ | σ' ēκφῠ | γοῑ ĕν | αν—

The only difference is that the insertion of rhyme in the English measure breaks the one line into two; but the metre remains, notwithstanding, intrinsically the same.

We have also Anacreontic measures—consisting of three pure Iambics, and one semiped—

Ŏ sōft | lў glī | dĭng nūm | bers
Thăt woō | tŏ gēn | tlĕ slūm | bers—

Θĕλῶ | λĕγεῖν | Ᾰτρεῖ | δας
Θĕλῶ | δĕ Kᾱδ | μŏν ᾳ | δειν—

And that exquisite Ode in Shakspeare sung by Ariel,

Whĕre thĕ | Bēe sŭcks | thēre sŭck | I,
On a | Bat's back | I do | fly,

precisely corresponds with the metre of the following lines in Horace,

Tū sĕ | cāndă | mārmŏ | ra | —
Summo | vere | litto | ra—
Paupe | rem la | bori | bus—

We have also Anapæstic verses in our metre—

Ănd thĕ Kīng | sĕiz'd ă flām | beău wĭth zēal | tŏ dĕstrōy |

A line that contains four Anapæsts, making twelve syllables and four feet. We are always to remember that our feet are regulated by *accent*, not by *quantity*.

down by Clement Marot. If you will say, that the song of the soldiers might be only the rude beginning of this kind of poem, and so consequently imperfect, neither Heinsius nor I can be of that opinion; and so I conclude, that we know nothing of the matter.

But, Sir, I ask your pardon for all this buffoonery, which I could not address to any one so well as to you, since I have found by experience, you most easily forgive my impertinencies. 'Tis only to show you that I am mindful of you at all times, that I write at all times; and as nothing I can say can be worth your reading, so I may as well throw out what comes uppermost, as study to be dull. I am, etc.

LETTER XV.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

July 15, 1710.

At last I have prevailed over a lazy humour to transcribe this elegy: I have changed the situation of some of the Latin verses, and made some interpolations, but I hope they are not absurd, and foreign to my author's sense and manner: but they are referred to your censure, as a debt: whom I esteem no less a critic than a poet: I expect to be treated with the same rigour as I have practised to Mr. Dryden and you.

Hanc veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.

I desire the favour of your opinion why Priam, in his speech to Pyrrhus in the second Æneid, says this to him,

> At non ille, satum quo te mentiris, *Achilles.*

He would intimate (I fancy by Pyrrhus's answer) only his degeneracy: but then these following lines of the version (I suppose from Homer's history) seem absurd in the mouth of Priam, viz.

> He cheer'd my sorrows, and for sums of gold
> The bloodless carcase of my *Hector* sold.

I am,

Your, etc.

LETTER XVI.

July 20, 1710.

I GIVE you thanks for the version you sent me of Ovid's elegy. It is very much an image of that author's writing, who has an agreeableness that charms us without correctness, like a mistress, whose faults we see, but love her with them all. You have very judiciously altered his method in some places, and I can find nothing which I dare insist upon as an error: what I have written in the margins being merely guesses at a little improvement, rather than criticisms. I assure you I do not expect you should subscribe to my private notions, but when you shall judge them agreeable to reason and good sense. What I have done is not as a critic, but as a friend; I know too well how many qualities are requisite to

make the one, and that I want almost all I can reckon up; but I am sure I do not want inclination, nor, I hope, capacity, to be the other. Nor shall I take it at all amiss, that another dissents from my opinion: 'tis no more than I have often done from my own; and indeed, the more a man advances in understanding, he becomes the more every day a critic upon himself, and finds something or other still to blame in his former notions and opinions. I could be glad to know if you have translated the 11th elegy of lib. ii. *Ad amicam navigantem.* The 8th of book iii. or the 11th of book iii. which are above all others my particular favourites, especially the last of these.

As to the passage of which you ask my opinion in the second Æneid, it is either so plain as to require no solution; or else (which is very probable) you see farther into it than I can. Priam would say, that "Achilles (whom surely you only feign to be your father, since your actions are so different from his) did not use me thus inhumanly. He blushed at his murder of Hector, when he saw my sorrows for him; and restored his dead body to me to be buried." To this the answer of Pyrrhus seems to be agreeable enough. "Go then to the shades, and tell Achilles how I degenerate from him:" granting the truth of what Priam had said of the difference between them. Indeed Mr. Dryden's mentioning here what Virgil more judiciously passes in silence, the circumstance of Achilles's selling *for money* the [3]body of Hector,

[3] This behaviour of Achilles could not escape an acute critic, but one too fond of carping at the ancients. "Forgive me (says Achilles), my dear Patroclus, for restoring the body of Hector to

seems not so proper; it in some measure lessening the character of Achilles's generosity and piety, which is the very point of which Priam endeavours in this place to convince his son, and to reproach him with the want of. But the truth of this circumstance is no way to be questioned, being expressly taken from Homer, who represents Achilles weeping for Priam, yet receiving the gold, Iliad xxiv. For when he gives the body, he uses these words: "O my friend Patroclus! forgive me that I quit the corpse of him who killed thee; I have great gifts in ransom for it, which I will bestow upon thy funeral."

I am, etc.

LETTER XVII.

FROM MR. CROMWELL

Aug. 5, 1710.

LOOKING among some French rhymes, I was agreeably surprised to find in the Rondeau of *Pour le moins*[4]—your Apoticaire and Lavement, which I took for your own; so much is your Muse of intelligence with the wits of all languages. You have re-

his father; car (on s'attend qu'il va dire) je n'ai pû resister aux larmes de ce pere infortuné; mais *non:* for he has brought me a great ransom. Such passages prove that true *heroism* was never so little known, as in the times called *heroic.*" *Marmontel. Poetique,* t. ii. p. 197.

The plain answer is, that Achilles speaks and behaves suitably to the manners, ideas, and sentiments of his age.

[4] In Voiture's Poems. P.

fined upon Voiture[5], whose *Où vous savez* is much inferior to your *You know where*—You do not only pay your club with your author (as our friend says) but the whole reckoning; who can form such pretty lines from so trivial a hint.

For my Elegy[6]; it is confessed, that the topography of Sulmo in the Latin makes but an awkward figure in the version. Your couplet of the dog-star is very fine, but may be too sublime in this place. I laughed heartily at your note upon paradise; for to make Ovid talk of the garden of Eden, is certainly most absurd; but Xenophon in his Œconomics, speaking of a garden finely planted and watered (as is here described) calls it Paradisos: 'tis an interpolation indeed, and serves for a gradation to the celestial orb; which expresses in some sort the *Sidus Castoris in parte cæli*—How trees can enjoy, let the naturalist determine; but the poets make them sensitive[7], lovers, batchelors, and married. Virgil in his Georgics, lib. ii. Horace Ode xv. lib. ii. *Platanus cœlebs evincet ulmos.* Epod. ii. *Ergo aut adulta vitium propagine Altas maritat populos.* Your critique is a very *Dolcepiccante;* for after the many faults you justly find, you smooth your rigour: but an obliging thing is owing (you think) to one who so much esteems and admires you, and who shall ever be

Your, &c.

[5] In which passage there is as little decency as gallantry.

[6] Ovid's Amorum, l. ii. el. xvi. Pars me Sulmo, etc. P.

[7] As Dr. Darwin has so successfully done in a poem that abounds in beautiful descriptions, and interesting digressions and allusions to ancient mythology.

LETTER XVIII.

August 21, 1710.

YOUR Letters are a perfect charity to a man in retirement, utterly forgotten of all his friends but you; for since Mr. Wycherley left London, I have not heard a word from him; though just before, and once since, I writ to him, and though I knew myself guilty of no offence but of doing sincerely just what he bid me[8]—*Hoc mihi libertas, hoc pia lingua dedit;* But the greatest injury he does me is the keeping me in ignorance of his welfare, which I am always very solicitous for, and very uneasy in the fear of any indisposition that may befal him. In what I sent you some time ago, you have not verse enough to be severe upon, in revenge for my last criticism; in one point I must persist, that is to say, my dislike of your Paradise, in which I take no pleasure; I know very well that in Greek it is not only used by Xenophon, but it is a common word for any garden; but in English it bears the signification and conveys the idea of Eden, which alone is (I think) a reason against making Ovid use it; who will be thought to talk too much like a Christian, in your version at least, whatever it might have been in Latin or Greek. As for all the rest of my remarks, since you do not laugh at them as at this, I can be so civil as not to lay any stress upon them (as, I think, I told you be-

[8] Correcting his verses. See the letters in 1706, and the following years, of Mr. Wycherley and Mr. Pope. P.

fore); and in particular in the point of *trees enjoying*, you have, I must own, fully satisfied me that the expression is not only defensible, but beautiful. I shall be very glad to see your translation of the elegy, *Ad amicam navigantem*, as soon as you can; for without a compliment to you) every thing you write, either in verse or prose, is welcome to me; and you may be confident (if my opinion can be of any sort of consequence in any thing) that I will never be unsincere, though I may be often mistaken. To use sincerity with you is but paying you in your own coin, from whom I have experienced so much of it; and I need not tell you how much I really esteem you, when I esteem nothing in the world so much as that quality. I know, you sometimes say civil things to me in your epistolary style, but those I am to make allowance for, as particularly when you talk of *admiring;* it is a word you are so used to in conversation of Ladies, that it will creep into your discourse, in spite of you, even to your friends. But as women, when they think themselves secure of admiration, commit a thousand negligences, which show them so much at disadvantage and off their guard, as to lose the little real love they had before: so when men imagine others entertain some esteem for their abilities, they often expose all their imperfections and foolish works, to the disparagement of the little wit they were thought master of. I am going to exemplify this to you, in putting into your hands (being encouraged by so much indulgence) some verses of my youth, or rather childhood; which (as I was a great admirer of Waller) were intended

in imitation of his manner[9]; and are, perhaps, such imitations, as those you see in awkward country dames, of the fine and well-bred ladies of the court. If you will take them with you into Lincolnshire, they may save you one hour from the conversation of the country gentlemen and their tenants (who differ but in dress and name), which, if it be there as bad as here, is even worse than my poetry. I hope your stay there will be no longer than (as Mr. Wycherley calls it) to rob the country, and run away to London with your money. In the mean time I beg the favour of a line from you, and am (as I will never cease to be)

Your, etc.

LETTER XIX.

Oct. 12, 1710.

I DEFERRED answering your last, upon the advice I received, that you were leaving the town for some time, and expected your return with impatience, having then a design of seeing my friends there, among the first of which I have reason to account yourself. But my almost continual illnesses prevent that, as well as most other satisfactions of my life: however, I may say one good thing of sickness, that it is the best cure in nature for ambition, and designs upon the world or fortune: it makes a man

[9] One or two of these were since printed among other Imitations done in his youth. P.

pretty indifferent for the future, provided he can but be easy, by intervals, for the present. He will be content to compound for his quiet only, and leave all the circumstantial part and pomp of life to those, who have health vigorous enough to enjoy all the mistresses of their desires. I thank God, there is nothing out of myself which I would be at the trouble of seeking, except a friend; a happiness I once hoped to have possessed in Mr. Wycherley; but—*Quantum mutatus ab illo!*—I have for some years been employed much like children that build houses with cards, endeavouring very busily and eagerly to raise a friendship, which the first breath of any ill-natured by-stander could puff away.—But I will trouble you no farther with writing, nor myself with thinking, of this subject.

I was mightily pleased, to perceive by your quotation from Voiture, that you had tracked me so far as France. You see it is with weak heads as with weak stomachs, they immediately throw out what they received last; and what they read floats upon the surface of the mind, like oil upon water, without incorporating. This, I think, however, cannot be said of the love-verses I last troubled you with, where all (I am afraid) is so puerile and so like the author, that nobody will suspect any thing to be borrowed. Yet you (as a friend, entertaining a better opinion of them) it seems, searched in Waller, but searched in vain. Your judgment of them is (I think) very right,—for it was my own opinion before. If you think them not worth the trouble of correcting, pray tell me so freely, and it will save

me a labour; If you think the contrary, you would particularly oblige me by your remarks on the several thoughts as they occur. I long to be nibbling at your verses, and have not forgot who promised me Ovid's elegy[1], *Ad amicam navigantem.* Had Ovid been as long composing it, as you in sending it, the lady might have sailed to Gades and received it at her return. I have really a great itch of criticism upon me, but want matter here in the country: which I desire you to furnish me with, as I do you in the town,

Sic servat studii fœdera quisque sui.

I am obliged to Mr. Caryl (whom, you tell me, you met at Epsom) for telling you truth, as a man is in these days to any one that will tell truth to his advantage; and I think none is more to mine, than what he told you, and I should be glad to tell all the world, that I have an extreme affection and esteem for you.

Tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles,
Et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes;
Unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo,
Atque verecunda laxamus seria mensa.

[1] In the present improved state of literature, for improved it is, we are surprised to see these critics and poets writing to each other with seriousness and earnestness, about translations of Ovid's Elegies and Epistles; which the youths at the top of our great schools would almost think it a disgrace to be employed about, at present.

But these are the steps by which we are now arrived to a much higher and better taste: and we ought not to think too contemptuously of the means by which we are so much gradually improved.

By these *Epulæ*, as I take it, Persius meant the Portugal snuff and burnt Claret, which he took with his master Cornutus; and the *verecunda mensa* was, without dispute, some coffee-house table of the ancients.—I will only observe, that these four lines are as elegant and musical as any in Persius, not excepting those six or seven which Mr. Dryden quotes as the only such in all that author.—I could be heartily glad to repeat the satisfaction described in them, being truly

Your, etc.

LETTER XX.

October 28, 1710.

I AM glad to find by your last letter that you write to me with the freedom of a friend, setting down your thoughts as they occur, and dealing plainly with me in the matter of my own trifles, which, I assure you, I never valued half so much as I do that sincerity in you which they were the occasion of discovering to me; and which while I am happy in, I may be trusted with that dangerous weapon, Poetry; since I shall do nothing with it but after asking and following your advice. I value sincerity the more, as I find, by sad experience, the practice of it is more dangerous; writers rarely pardoning the executioners of their verses, even though themselves pronounce sentence upon them.——As to Mr. Philips's Pastorals, I take the first to be infinitely the

best, and the second the worst; the third is for the greatest part a translation from Virgil's Daphnis. I will not forestal your judgment of the rest, only observe in that of the Nightingale these lines (speaking of the musician's playing on the harp):

> Now lightly skimming o'er the strings they pass,
> Like winds that gently brush the plying grass,
> And melting airs arise at their command;
> And now laborious, with a weighty hand,
> He sinks into the cords with solemn pace,
> And gives the swelling tones a manly grace.

To which nothing can be objected, but that they are too lofty for pastoral, especially being put into the mouth of a shepherd, as they are here; in the poet's own person they have been (I believe) more proper. They are more after Virgil's manner than that of Theocritus, whom yet in the character of pastoral he rather seems to imitate. In the whole, I agree with the Tatler, that we have no better Eclogues in our language. There is a small copy of the same author published in the Tatler N° 12. on the Danish winter: 'Tis poetical painting, and I recommend it to your perusal.

Dr. Garth's poem I have not seen, but believe I shall be of that critic's opinion you mention at *Will's*, who swore it was good: for though I am very cautious of swearing after critics, yet I think one may do it more safely when they commend, than when they blame.

I agree with you in your censure of the use of sea terms[2] in Mr. Dryden's Virgil; not only because

[2] They are as certainly improper and absurd, as his use of the same kind of terms in his *Annus Mirabilis*, where a sea-engage-

Helenus was no great prophet in these matters, but because no terms of art or cant-words suit with the majesty and dignity of style which epic poetry requires.——*Cui mens divinior atque os magna sonaturum.*——The Tarpawlin phrase can please none but such *qui aurem habent Batavam;* they must not expect *auribus Atticis probari*, I find by you. (I think I have brought in two phrases of Martial here very dextrously.)

Though you say you did not rightly take my meaning in the verse I quoted from Juvenal, yet I will not explain it; because, though it seems you are resolved to take me for a critic, I would by no means be thought a commentator—and for another reason too, because I have quite forgot both the verse and the application.

I hope it will be no offence to give my most hearty service to Mr. Wycherley, though I perceive, by his last to me, I am not to trouble him with my letters, since he there told me he was going instantly out of town, and till his return was my servant, etc. I guess by yours he is yet with you, and beg you to do what you may with all truth and honour, that is, assure him I have ever borne all the respect and kindness imaginable to him. I do not know to this hour what it is that has estranged him from me; but this I know, that he may for the future be more safely my friend, since no invitation of his shall ever more make me so free with him. I could not have thought

ment is described. Boileau values himself for being the first French poet that introduced gunpowder, and a peruke, gracefully into poetry. A strange boast undoubtedly!

any man so very cautious and suspicious, as not to credit his own experience of a friend. Indeed, to believe nobody, may be a maxim of safety, but not so much of honesty. There is but one way I know of conversing safely with all men, that is, not by concealing what we say or do, but by saying or doing nothing that deserves to be concealed, and I can truly boast this comfort in my affairs with Mr. Wycherley. But I pardon his Jealousy, which is become his nature, and shall never be his enemy whatsoever he says of me.

Your, etc.

LETTER XXI.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

Nov. 5, 1710.

I FIND I am obliged to the sight of your love-verses, for your opinion of my sincerity; which had never been called in question, if you had not forced me, upon so many other occasions, to express my esteem.

I have just read and compared[3] Mr. Rowe's version of the ixth of Lucan, with very great pleasure, where I find none of those absurdities so frequent in that of Virgil, except in two places, for the sake of lashing the priests; one where Cato says——*Sortilegis egeant dubii*—and one in the simile of the

[3] Pieces printed in the 6th vol. of Tonson's Miscellanies. P.

Hæmorrhois—*fatidici Sabæi*—He is so arrogant a whig, that he strains even beyond his author, in passion for liberty, and aversion to tyranny; and errs only in amplification. *Lucan* ix. *in initio*, describing the seat of the *Semidei manes*, says,

> Quodque patet terras inter luneæque meatus,
> Semidei manes habitant.

Mr. Rowe has this Line,

> Then looking down on the Sun's feeble Ray.

Pray your opinion, if there be an Error-Sphæricus in this or no?

Your, etc.

LETTER XXII.

Nov. 11, 1710.

You mistake me very much in thinking the freedom you kindly used with my love-verses, gave me the first opinion of your sincerity: I assure you it only did what every good-natured action of yours has done since, confirmed me more in that opinion. The fable of the Nightingale in Philips's Pastorals is taken from Famianus Strada's Latin poem on the same subject, in his *Prolusiones Academicæ;* only the tomb he erects at the end, is added from Virgil's conclusion of the *Culex*. I can't forbear giving a passage out of the Latin poem I mention, by which you will find the English poet is indebted to it.

Alternat mira arte fides: dum torquet acutas,
Inciditque, graves operoso verbere pulsat.
Jamque manu per fila volat; simul hos, simul illos
Explorat numeros, chordaque laborat in omni.——
Mox silet. Illa modis totidem respondet, et artem
Arte refert. Nunc ceu rudis, aut incerta canendi,
Præbet iter liquidum labenti e pectore voci,
Nunc cæsim variat, modulisque canora minutis
Delibrat[4] vocem, tremuloque *reciprocat*[4] ore.

This poem was many years since imitated by Crashaw, out of whose verses the following are very remarkable:

From this to that, from that to this he flies,
Feels music's pulse in all its arteries;
Caught in a net which there *Apollo* spreads,
His fingers struggle with the vocal threads.

I have (as I think I formerly told you) a very good opinion[5] of Mr. Rowe's ixth book of Lucan: indeed

[4] Neither of these words is used by Horace or Virgil: *reciprocat* is to be found in Lucretius, Book iii. 1101, but in another sense.

[5] Rowe's translation of Lucan has certainly never met with the popularity and applause it deserved. It is one of the few translations that is better than its original. I venture to say the same of three more translations; namely, of *Hampton's Polybius;* of *Pitt's Vida;* and of *Melmoth's Pliny*. *Brebœuf*, says Vigneul-Marville, was *Lucano Lucanior*. Horace was the favourite of Brebœuf in his youth, as was Lucan of his friend M. Gautier. They disputed so frequently and so warmly on the preference due to each of their favourites, that they agreed to give these authors a very attentive reading. The consequence was, they became mutual converts; Brebœuf became intoxicated with the love of Lucan, and Gautier of Horace. Melanges, v. i. p. 25.

These Melanges are, I perceive, become of late a popular book. Dr. Campbell, above fifty years ago, was the person who I remember first recommended them to me, and occasioned me to give several quotations from them. They have more learning than the *Menagiana*, or indeed than any of the numerous *Ana*, so much at

he amplifies too much, as well as Brebœuf, the famous French imitator. If I remember right, he sometimes takes the whole comment into the text of the version, as particularly in line 808. *Utque solet pariter totis se effundere signis Corycii pressura croci.* —And in the place you quote, he makes of those two lines in the Latin,

> Vidit quanta sub nocte jaceret
> Nostra dies, risitque sui ludibria trunci,

no less than eight in English.

What you observe, sure, cannot be an Error-Sphæricus strictly speaking, either according to the Ptolemaic, or our Copernican system; Tycho Brahe himself will be on the translator's side. For Mr. Rowe here says no more, than that he looked down on the rays of the sun, which Pompey might do, even though the body of the sun were above him.

You can't but have remarked what a journey Lucan here makes Cato take for the sake of his fine descriptions. From Cyrene he travels by land, for no better reason than this;

> Hæc eadem suadebat hiems, quæ clauserat æquor.

The winter's effects on the sea, it seems, were more to be dreaded than all the serpents, whirlwinds, sands, etc. by land, which immediately after he paints out in his speech to the soldiers: then he

present in vogue. Bayle was fond of them, frequently quotes them in his Dictionary, and in his Letters, 1699; where he was the first who informs us of the real name of the author, Dom. Bonaventure d' Argonne, Prior of the Carthusians of Gaillon.

fetches a compass a vast way round about, to the Nasamones and Jupiter Ammon's temple, purely to ridicule the oracles: and Labienus must pardon me, if I do not believe him when he says—*sors obtulit, et fortuna viæ*—either Labienus, or the map, is very much mistaken here. Thence he returns back to the Syrtes (which he might have taken first in his way to Utica), and so to Leptis Minor, where our author leaves him; who seems to have made Cato speak his own mind, when he tells his army—*Ire sat est*—no matter whither. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIII.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

Nov. 20, 1710.

THE system of Tycho Brahe (were it true, as it is novel) could have no room here: Lucan, with the rest of the Latin poets, seems to follow Plato; whose order of the spheres is clear in Cicero, *De natura Deorum*, *De somnio Scipionis*, and in Macrobius. The seat of the *Semidei manes* is Platonic too, for *Apuleius De deo Socratis* assigns the same to the Genii, viz. the region of the Air for their intercourse with Gods and men; so that, I fancy, Rowe mistook the situation, and I can't be reconciled to *Look down on the sun's rays*. I am glad you agree with me about the latitude he takes; and wish you had told me if the *sortilegi*, and *fatidici*, could license his invec-

tive against priests; but, I suppose, you think them (with Helena) undeserving of your protection. I agree with you in Lucan's errors, and the cause of them, his poetic descriptions; for the Romans then knew the coast of Africa from Cyrene (to the south-east of which lies Ammon toward Egypt) to Leptis and Utica: but, pray, remember how your Homer nodded, while Ulysses slept, and waking knew not where he was, in the short passage from Corcyra to Ithaca. I like Trapp's versions[6] for their justness; his Psalm is excellent, the prodigies in the first Georgic judicious (whence I conclude that 'tis easier to turn Virgil justly in blank verse, than rhyme). The eclogue of Gallus, and fable of Phaeton, pretty well; but he is very faulty in his numbers; the fate of Phaeton might run thus,

> The blasted *Phaeton* with blazing hair,
> Shot gliding thro' the vast abyss of air,
> And tumbled headlong like a falling star.

I am Your, etc.

LETTER XXIV.

Nov. 24, 1710.

To make use of that freedom and familiarity of style, which we have taken up in our correspondence,

[6] Of all the parts of Trapp's translation of Virgil, that of his Georgics is most blamable and prosaic. The Author of the Prelections lost himself much in this translation of Virgil; yet many of his notes shew that he understood and felt his author: and his Prelections may be read with advantage by young scholars. His Latin translation of Milton was a woful performance.

and which is more properly talking upon paper, than writing; I will tell you without any preface, that I never took Tycho Brahe for one of the ancients, or in the least an acquaintance of Lucan's; nay, 'tis a mercy on this occasion that I do not give you an account of his life and conversation; as how he lived some years like an inchanted knight in a certain island, with a tale of a King of Denmark's mistress that shall be nameless—But I have compassion on you, and would not for the world you should stay any longer among the Genii and Semidei Manes, you know where; for if once you get so near the moon, Sappho will want your presence in the clouds and inferior regions; not to mention the great loss Drury-lane will sustain, when Mr. C—— is in the milky-way. These celestial thoughts put me in mind of the priests you mention, who are a sort of sortilegi in one sense, because in their lottery there are more blanks than prizes: the adventurers being at first in an uncertainty, whereas the setters-up are sure of something. Priests indeed in their character, as they represent God, are sacred: and so are constables, as they represent the King; but you will own a great many of them are very odd fellows, and the devil of any likeness in them. Yet I can assure you, I honour the good as much as I detest the bad, and I think, that in condemning these, we praise those. The translations from Ovid I have not so good an opinion of as you; because I think they have little of the main characteristic of this author, a graceful easiness. For let the sense be ever so exactly rendered, unless an author looks like himself,

in his air, habit, and manner, 'tis a disguise, and not translation. But as to the Psalm, I think David is much more beholden to the translator than Ovid; and as he treated the Roman like a Jew, so he has made the Jew speak like a Roman.

Your, etc.

LETTER XXV.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

Dec. 5, 1710.

THE same judgment we made on Rowe's ixth of Lucan will serve for his part of the vith, where I find this memorable line,

> Parque novum Fortuna videt concurrere, bellum
> Atque virum.

For this he employs six verses, among which is this,

> As if on Knightly terms in lists they ran.

Pray can you trace chivalry[7] up higher than Pharamond? will you allow it an anachronism?—Tickle in his version of the Phœnix from Claudian,

> When nature ceases, thou shalt still remain,
> Nor second Chaos bound thy endless train.

[7] Nothing surely can be so totally abhorrent from all the ideas of antiquity as chivalry, the rise and genius of which are no where so amply and accurately investigated as by that curious antiquary M. De la Curne de Sainte-Palaye, in a Memoir first published in the 20th volume of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, and afterward enlarged and published in two volumes at Paris, 1759.

Claudian thus,

> Et clades te nulla rapit, solusque superstes,
> Edomita tellure, manes.

which plainly refers to the deluge of Deucalion, and the conflagration of Phaeton; not to the final dissolution. Your thought of the priests lottery is very fine: you play the wit, and not the critic, upon the errors of your brother.

Your observations are all very just: Virgil is eminent for adjusting his diction to his sentiments; and among the moderns, I find you practise the Prosodia of your rules. Your[8] poem shews you to be, what you say of Voiture—*with books well bred:* the state of the fair, though satirical, is touched with that delicacy and gallantry, that not the court of Augustus, not—But hold, I shall lose what I lately recovered, your opinion of my sincerity: yet I must say, 'tis as faultless as the fair to whom it is addressed, be she never so perfect. The M. G. (who, it seems, had no right notion of you, as you of him) transcribed it by lucubration: From some discourse of yours, he thought your inclination led you to (what the men of fashion call learning) pedantry; but now, he says, he has no less, I assure you, than a veneration for

Your, etc.

[8] To a Lady, with the Works of Voiture. P.

LETTER XXVI.

December 17, 1710.

It seems that my late mention of Crashaw, and my quotation from him, has moved your curiosity. I therefore send you the whole Author, who has held a place among my other books of this nature for some years; in which time having read him twice or thrice, I find him one of those whose works may just deserve reading. I take this poet to have writ like a gentleman, that is, at leisure hours, and more to keep out of idleness, than to establish a reputation; so that nothing regular or just can be expected from him. All that regards design, form, fable, (which is the soul of poetry,) all that concerns exactness, or consent of parts, (which is the body,) will probably be wanting; only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glittering expressions, and something of a neat cast of verse, (which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry,) may be found in these verses. This is indeed the case of most other poetical writers of miscellanies; nor can it well be otherwise, since no man can be a true poet, who writes for diversion only. These authors should be considered as versifiers and witty men, rather than as poets; and under this head will only fall the thoughts, the expression, and the numbers. These are only the pleasing part of poetry, which may be judged of at a view, and comprehend all at once. And (to express myself like a painter) their colouring enter-

tains the sight, but the lines and life of the picture are not to be inspected too narrowly.

This Author formed himself upon Petrarch, or rather upon Marino[9]. His thoughts, one may observe, in the main, are pretty; but oftentimes far fetched, and too often strained and stiffened to make them appear the greater. For men are never so apt to think a thing great, as when it is odd or wonderful; and inconsiderate authors would rather be admired than understood. This ambition of surprizing a reader, is the true natural cause of all fustian, or bombast in poetry. To confirm what I have said, you need but look into his first poem of the Weeper where the 2d, 4th, 6th, 14th, 21st stanzas are as sublimely dull, as the 7th, 8th, 9th, 16th, 17th, 20th, and 23d stanzas of the same copy, are soft and pleasing: and if these last want any thing, it is an easier and more unaffected expression. The remaining thoughts in that poem might have been spared, being either but repetitions, or very trivial and mean. And by this example in the first one may guess at all the rest; to be like this, a mixture of tender gentle

[9] *Crashaw* was so fond of *Marino*, a writer of fine imagination but little judgment, as to translate the whole first book of his *Strage de gli Innocenti* (published 1633), which *Marino* himself preferred to his *Il Adone*, and to which *Milton* was indebted for many hints, which, however, he greatly improved. See particularly Stanza 7, and several succeeding Stanzas in *Crashaw*, p. 35, for a description of *Satan*. Milton, in his *Mansus*, celebrates the Adonis: the *Strage* was not then published. It was first printed in France, and Chapelain prefixed a learned preface to it. There was a translation of all the four books of the *Slaughter of the Innocents*, published 1675, by T. R. *and dedicated to the Dutchess of York.*

thoughts and suitable expressions, of forced and inextricable conceits, and of needless fillers-up to the rest. From all which it is plain, this author writ fast, and set down what came uppermost. A reader may skim off the froth, and use the clear underneath; but if he goes too deep, will meet with a mouthful of dregs; either the top or bottom of him are good for little, but what he did in his own, natural, middle-way, is best.

To speak of his numbers, is a little difficult, they are so various and irregular, and mostly Pindaric; 'tis evident his heroic verse (the best example of which is his Music's duel) is carelessly made up; but one may imagine from what it now is, that had he taken more care, it had been musical and pleasing enough, not extremely majestic, but sweet: and the time considered of his writing, he was (even as uncorrect as he is) none of the worst versificators.

I will just observe, that the best pieces[1] of this

[1] To these might be added some other pieces of *Crashaw* that deserved his praise; particularly a translation from *Moschus*, and another from *Catullus*. His 23d Psalm is not equal to that of *Sandys'*, whose Psalms deserve much more attention than they meet with. *Roscommon* has borrowed many lines from the *Dies Iræ* of *Crashaw*, particularly Stanza 17,

> "My God, my Father, and my Friend,
> Do not forsake me in my end!"

Crashaw gives it thus, page 194 of his Poems, 1670,

> "My Hope, my Fear, my Judge, my Friend,
> Take charge of me and of my end!"

Pope has taken many expressions and lines from this author, who having been a convert to popery, we may imagine was recommended to our author in his younger years. It is in his

author are a paraphrase on Psal. xxiii. On Lessius, Epitaph on Mr. Ashton, Wishes to his supposed mistress, and the *Dies Iræ*.

LETTER XXVII.

December 30, 1710.

I RESUME my old liberty of throwing out myself upon paper to you, and making what thoughts float uppermost in my head, the subject of a letter. They are at present upon laughter, which (for aught I know) may be the cause you might sometime sthink me too remiss a friend, when I was most entirely so: for I am never so inclined to mirth as when I am most pleased and most easy, which is in the company of a friend like yourself.

As the fooling and toying with a mistress is a proof of fondness, not disrespect, so is raillery with a friend. I know there are prudes in friendship, who expect distance, awe, and adoration; but I know you are not of them; and I for my part am no idol-worshipper, though a Papist. If I were to address Jupiter himself in a heathen way, I fancy I should be apt to take hold of his knee in a familiar manner, if not of his

Eloisa to Abelard that many expressions and thoughts of Crashaw chiefly occur; particularly his description of a religious house, from Barclay; the situation of the Paraclete; and also line 347, from the complaint of Alexias, the forsaken wife of Ælexis, though much heightened and improved. Cowley wrote a poem on Crashaw's death, whom he highly celebrates. He died of a fever at Loretto, being newly chosen canon of that church.

beard like Dionysius; I was just going to say, of his buttons; but I think Jupiter wore none (however I won't be positive to so nice a critic as you, but his robe might be subnected with a Fibula). I know some philosophers define laughter, *A recommending ourselves to our own favour, by comparison with the weakness of another:* but I am sure I very rarely laugh with that view, nor do I believe children have any such consideration in their heads, when they express their pleasure this way: I laugh full as innocently as they, for the most part, and as sillily. There is a difference too betwixt laughing *about* a thing, and laughing *at* a thing: one may find the inferior man (to make a kind of casuistical distinction) provoked to folly at the sight or observation of some *circumstances of a thing*, when the *thing itself* appears solemn and august to the superior man, that is, our judgment and reason. Let an ambassador speak the best sense in the world, and deport himself in the most graceful manner before a Prince, yet if the tail of his shirt happen (as I have known it to happen to a very wise man) to hang out behind, more people shall laugh at that than attend to the other; till they recollect themselves, and then they will not have a jot the less respect for the minister. I must confess the iniquity of my countenance before you; several muscles of my face sometimes take an impertinent liberty with my judgment, but then my judgment soon rises, and sets all right again about my mouth: and I find I value no man so much, as him in whose sight I have been playing the fool. I cannot be *sub persona* before a man I love; and not to

laugh with honesty, when nature prompts, or folly (which is more a second nature than any thing I know), is but a knavish hypocritical way of making a mask of one's own face.—To conclude, those are my friends *I laugh with*, and those that are not *I laugh at;* so am merry in company, and if ever I am wise, it is all by myself. You take just another course, and to those that are not your friends, are very civil: and to those that are, very endearing and complaisant; thus when you and I meet, there will be the *Risus & Blanditiæ* united together in conversation, as they commonly are in verse. But without laughter on the one side, or compliment on the other, I assure you I am, with real esteem,

Your, &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

October 16, 1711.

Mr. Wycherley visited me at Bath in my sickness, and expressed much affection to me: hearing from me how welcome his letters would be, he presently writ to you; in which I inserted my scrall, and after a second. He went to Gloucester in his way to Salop, but was disappointed of a boat, and so returned to the Bath; then he shewed me your answer to his letters, in which you spoke of my good-nature, but, I fear, you found me very froward at Reading; yet you allow for my illness. I could not

possibly be in the same house with Mr. Wycherley, though I sought it earnestly; nor come up to town with him, he being engaged with others; but, whenever we met, we talked of you. He praises your [2] Poem, and even outvies me in kind expressions of you. As if he had not wrote two letters to you, he was for writing every post; I put him in mind he had already. Forgive me this wrong; I know not whether my talking so much of your great humanity and tenderness to me, and love to him; or whether the return of his natural disposition to you, was the cause; but certainly you are now highly in his favour: now he will come this winter to your house, and I must go with him; but first he will invite you speedily to town.—I arrived on Saturday last much wearied, yet had wrote sooner, but was told by Mr. Gay (who has writ a pretty poem to Lintot, and who gives you his service) that you was gone from home. Lewis shewed me your letter, which set me right, and your next letter is impatiently expected from me. Mr. Wycherley came to town on Sunday last, and kindly surprised me with a visit on Monday morning. We dined and drank together; and I saying, *To our loves*, he replied, '*Tis Mr.* Pope's *health*. He said he would go to Mr. Thorold's and leave a letter for you. Though I cannot answer for the event of all this, in respect of him: yet I can assure you, that, when you please to come, you will be most desirable to me, as always by inclination, so now by duty, who shall ever be

Your, &c.

[2] Essay on Criticism. P.

LETTER XXIX.

November 12, 1711.

I RECEIVED the entertainment of your letter the day after I had sent you one of mine, and I am but this morning returned hither. The news you tell me of the many difficulties you found in your return from Bath, gives me such a kind of pleasure as we usually take in accompanying our friends in their mixed adventures; for, methinks, I see you labouring through all your inconveniences of the rough roads, the hard saddle, the trotting horse, and what not. What an agreeable surprize would it have been to me, to have met you by pure accident (which I was within an ace of doing), and to have carried you off triumphantly, set you on an easier pad, and relieved the wandering knight with a night's lodging and rural repast, at our castle in the forest! But these are only the pleasing imaginations of a disappointed lover, who must suffer in a melancholy absence yet these two months. In the mean time, I take up with the Muses for want of your better company; the Muses, *quæ nobiscum pernoctant, peregrinantur, rusticantur*. Those aërial ladies just discover enough to me of their beauties to urge my pursuit, and draw me on in a wandering maze of thought, still in hopes (and only in hopes) of attaining those favours from them, which they confer on their more happy admirers. We grasp some more beautiful idea in our own brain, than our endeavours to express it can set to

the view of others; and still do but labour to fall short of our first imagination. The gay colouring which fancy gave at the first transient glance we had of it, goes off in the execution: like those various figures in the gilded clouds, which while we gaze long upon, to separate the parts of each imaginary image, the whole faints before the eye, and decays into confusion.

I am highly pleased with the knowledge you give me of Mr. Wycherley's present temper, which seems so favourable to me. I shall never have such a fund of affection for him as to be agreeable to myself when I am so to him, and cannot but be gay when he is in good humour, as the surface of the earth (if you will pardon a poetical similitude) is clearer or gloomier, just as the sun is brighter or more overcast.——I should be glad to see the verses to Lintot which you mention, for, methinks, something oddly agreeable may be produced from that subject—For what remains, I am so well, that nothing but the assurance of your being so can make me better; and if you would have me live with any satisfaction these dark days in which I cannot see you, it must be by your writing sometimes to

Your, &c.

LETTER XXX.

FROM MR. CROMWELL.

December 7, 1711.

Mr. WYCHERLEY has, I believe, sent you two or three letters of invitation; but you, like the fair, will be long solicited before you yield, to make the favour the more acceptable to the lover. He is much yours by his talk; for that unbounded genius which has ranged at large like a libertine, now seems confined to you: and I should take him for your mistress too by your simile of the sun and earth: 'tis very fine, but inverted by the application; for the gaiety of your fancy and the drooping of his by the withdrawing of your lustre, persuades me it would be juster by the reverse. Oh happy favourite of the Muses! how *pernoctare* all night long with them? but alas! you do but toy, but skirmish with them, and decline a close engagement. Leave elegy and translation to the inferior class, on whom the Muses only glance now and then, like our winter-sun, and then leave them in the dark. Think on the dignity of Tragedy, which is of the greater poetry, as Dennis says, and foil him at his other weapon, as you have done in Criticism. Every one wonders that a genius like [3] yours will not support the sinking Drama; and Mr. Wilks (though I think his talent is Comedy) has

[3] He shewed his excellent good sense, by not attempting a species of poetry to which he was so much disinclined; I do not say unequal.

expressed a furious ambition to swell in your buskins. We have had a poor Comedy of Johnson's (not Ben) which held seven nights, and has got him three hundred pounds, for the town is sharp-set on new plays. In vain would I fire you by interest or ambition, when your mind is not susceptible of either; though your authority (arising from the general esteem, like that of Pompey) must infallibly assure you of success; for which in all your wishes you will be attended with those of

Your, etc.

LETTER XXXI.

December 21, 1711.

If I have not writ to you so soon as I ought, let my writing now atone for the delay; as it will infallibly do, when you know what a sacrifice I make you at this time, and that every moment my eyes are employed upon this paper, they are taken off from two of the finest faces in the universe. But indeed 'tis some consolation to me to reflect, that while I but write this period, I escape some hundred fatal darts from those unerring eyes, and about a thousand deaths or better. Now you, that delight in dying, would not once have dreamt of an absent friend in these circumstances; you that are so nice an admirer of beauty, or (as a Critic would say after Terence) *so elegant a spectator of forms;* you must have a sober dish of coffee, and a solitary candle at your side, to

write an epistle lucubratory to your friend, whereas I can do it as well with two pair of radiant lights, that outshine the golden god of day and silver goddess of night, and all the refulgent eyes of the firmament.—You fancy now that Sappho's eyes are two of these my tapers, but it is no such matter; these are eyes that have more persuasion in one glance than all Sappho's oratory and gesture together, let her put her body into what moving posture she pleases. Indeed, indeed, my friend, you never could have found so improper a time to tempt me with interest or ambition: let me but have the reputation of these in my keeping, and as for my own, let the devil, or let Dennis, take it for ever. How gladly would I give all I am worth, that is to say, my Pastorals, for one of them, and my Essay for the other; I would lay out all my Poetry in Love; an Original for a Lady, and a Translation for a Waiting-maid! Alas! what have I to do with Jane Gray, as long as Miss Molly, Miss Betty, or Miss Patty, are in this world? Shall I write of beauties murdered long ago, when there are those at this instant that murder me? I'll e'en compose my own Tragedy, and the Poet shall appear in his own person, to move compassion: 'twill be far more effectual than Bays's entering with a rope about his neck, and the world will own, there never was a more miserable object brought upon the stage.

Now you that are a critic, pray inform me in what manner I may connect the foregoing part of this letter with that which is to follow, according to the rules? I would willingly have returned Mr. Gay my

thanks for the favour of his poem, and in particular for his kind mention of me; I hoped, when I heard a new Comedy had met with success upon the stage, that it had been his, to which I really wish no less; and (had it been any way in my power) should have been very glad to have contributed to its introduction into the world. His verses to Lintot[4] have put a whim into my head, which you are like to be troubled with in the opposite page: take it as you find it, the production of half an hour t'other morning. I design very soon to put a task of a more serious nature upon you, in reviewing a piece of mine that may better deserve criticism; and by that time you have done with it, I hope to tell you in person with how much fidelity I am

Your, etc.

[4] These verses are printed in Dr. Swift's and our Author's Miscellanies. W.

LETTERS

TO

SEVERAL LADIES[a].

LETTER I.

Madam, March 1, 1705.

I SEND you the book of rudiments of Drawing, which you were pleased to command, and think myself obliged to inform you at the same time of one of the many excellencies you possess without knowing of them. You are but too good a Painter already; and no picture of Raphael's was ever so beautiful, as that which you have formed in a certain heart of my acquaintance. Indeed it was but just that the finest lines in nature should be drawn upon the most durable ground, and none could ever be me met with, that will

[a] Most of these were printed without the Author's consent, and no doubt are the same upon which the censure is passed in the Preface, "That they have too much of a juvenile ambition of wit, and affectation of gaiety." And it is pleaded in excuse, "that they were written very young, and the folly was soon over." P.

After this candid censure, passed by our author himself, on the succeeding Thirty-three Letters to several Ladies, it would be invidious to say any thing more of their being very unworthy of him; always excepting the last, to Mrs. Arabella Fermor, on her marriage, which is full of gallantry and elegance.

so readily receive, or so faithfully retain them, as this Heart. I may boldly say of it, that you will not find its fellow in all the parts of the body in this book. But I must complain to you of my hand, which is an arrant traitor to my heart: for having been copying your picture from thence and from Kneller these three days, it has done all possible injury to the finest face that ever was made, and to the liveliest image that ever was drawn. I have imagination enough in your absence, to trace some resemblance of you; but I have been so long used to lose my judgment at the sight of you that it is past my power to correct it by the life. Your picture seems least like when placed before your eyes; and, contrary to all other pictures, receives a manifest disadvantage by being set on the fairest light in the world. The Painters are a very vain generation, and have a long time pretended to rival nature; but to own the truth to you, she made such a finished piece about three and twenty years ago, (I beg your pardon, Madam; I protest, I meant but two and twenty,) that 'tis in vain for them any longer to contend with her. I know you indeed made one something like it, betwixt five and six years past: 'twas a little, done with abundance of spirit and life, and wants nothing but time to be an admirable piece: but, not to flatter your work, I don't think it will ever come up to what your father made. However I would not discourage you; 'tis certain you have a strange happiness, of making fine things of a sudden and at a stroke, with incredible ease and pleasure.

I am, etc.

LETTER II.

It is too much a rule[5] in this town, that when a lady has once done a man a favour, he is to be rude to her ever after. It becomes our sex to take upon us twice as much as yours allow us; by this method I may write to you most impudently, because you once answered me modestly; and if you should never do me that honour for the future, I am to think (like a true coxcomb) that your silence gives consent. Perhaps you wonder why this is addressed to you rather than to Mrs. M——, with whom I have a right of an old acquaintance, whereas you are a fine lady, have bright eyes, etc. First, Madam, I make choice of you rather than of your mother, because you are younger than your mother. Secondly, because I fancy you spell better, as having been at school later. Thirdly, because you have nothing to do but write if you please, and possibly it may keep you from employing yourself worse: it may save some honest neighbouring gentleman from three or four of your pestilent glances. Cast your eyes upon paper, Madam, there you may look innocently; men are seducing, books are dangerous, the amorous ones soften you, and the godly ones give you spleen: if you look upon trees, they clasp in embraces; birds and beasts make love: the sun is too warm for your blood; the moon melts you into yielding and melancholy. There-

[5] We cannot but regret the want of a date and address to all these letters.

fore I say once more, cast your eyes upon paper, and read only such letters as I write, which convey no darts, no flames, but proceed from innocence of soul and simplicity of heart. Thank God, I am an hundred miles off from those eyes! I would sooner trust your hand than them for doing me mischief; and though I doubt not some part of the rancour and iniquity of your heart will drop into your pen, yet since it will not attack me on a sudden and unprepared, since I may have time while I break open your letter to cross myself and say a Pater-noster, I hope Providence will protect me from all you can attempt at this distance. I am told you are at this hour as handsome as an angel; for my part, I have forgot your face since two winters. You may be grown to a giantess for all I know. I can't tell in any respect what sort of creature you are, only that you are a very mischievous one, whom I shall ever pray to be defended from. But when your Minister sends me word you have the small-pox, a good many freckles, or are very pale, I will desire him to give thanks for it in your parish church; which as soon as he shall inform me he has done, I will make you a visit without armour: I will eat any thing you give me without suspicion of poison, take you by the hand without gloves, nay venture to follow you into an harbour without calling the company. This, Madam, is the top of my wishes, but how differently are our desires inclined! You sigh out in the ardour of your heart, O play-houses, parks, operas, assemblies, London! I cry with rapture, O woods, gardens, rookeries, fish-ponds, arbours! Mrs. M——.

LETTER III.

TO A LADY.

[Written on one column of a letter, while Lady M. wrote to the Lady's Husband on the other.]

THE wits would say, that this must needs be a dull letter because it is a married one. I am afraid indeed you will find, what spirit there is, must be on the side of the wife, and the husband's part, as usual, will prove the dullest. What an unequal pair are put together in this sheet? in which, though we sin, it is you must do penance. When you look on both sides of this paper, you may fancy that our words (according to a Scripture expression) are as a two-edged sword, whereof Lady M. is the shining blade, and I only the handle. But I can't proceed without so far mortifying Sir Robert as to tell him, that she writes this purely in obedience to me, and that it is but one of those honours a husband receives for the sake of his wife.

It is making court but ill to one fine woman to shew her the regard we have for another; and yet I must own there is not a period of this epistle but squints towards another over-against it. It will be in vain to dissemble: your penetrating eyes cannot but discover, how all the letters that compose these words lean forward after Lady M.'s letters, which seem to bend as much from mine, and fly from them as fast as they are able. Ungrateful letters that they are! which give themselves to another man, in the very presence

of him who will yield to no mortal, in knowing how to value them.

You will think I forgot myself, and am not writing to you; but, let me tell you, 'tis you forget yourself in that thought, for you are almost the only woman to whom one can safely address the praises of another. Besides, can you imagine a man of my importance so stupid, as to say fine things to you before your husband? Let us see how far Lady M. herself dares do any thing like it, with all the wit and address she is mistress of. If Sir Robert can be so ignorant (now he is left to himself in the country) to imagine any such matter, let him know from me, that here in town every thing that lady says, is taken for satire. For my part, every body knows it is my constant practice to speak truth, and I never do it more than when I call myself Your, &c.

LETTER IV.

You have put me into so much gaiety of temper, that there will not be a serious word in this day's letter. No more, you will say, there would, if I told you the whole serious business of the town. All last night I continued with you, though your unreasonable regularity drove me out of your doors at three o'clock. I dreamed all over the evening's conversation, and saw the little bed in spite of you. In the morning I waked, very angry at your phantom for leaving me so abruptly.——I know you delight in my

mortification. I dined with an old Beauty; she appeared at the table like a Death's head enamelled. The Egyptians, you know, had such things at their entertainments; but do you think they painted and patched them? However, the last of these objections was soon removed; for the lady had so violent an appetite for a salmon, that she quickly eat all the patches off her face. She divided the fish into three parts; not equal, God knows; for she helped Gay to the head, me to the middle, and making the rest much the largest part, took it herself, and cried very naively, I'll be content with my own tail.

My supper was as singular as my dinner. It was with a great Poet[7] and Ode-maker (that is, a great poet out of his wits, or out of his way). He came to me very hungry; not for want of a dinner (for that I should make no jest of) but having forgot to dine. He fell most furiously on the broiled relics of a shoulder of mutton, commonly called a blade-bone: he professed he never tasted so exquisite a thing! begged me to tell him what joint it was; wondered he had never heard the name of this joint, or seen it at other tables; and desired to know how he might direct his butcher to cut out the same for the future. And yet this man, so ignorant in modern butchery, has cut up half an hundred heroes, and quartered five or six miserable lovers in every tragedy he has written. I have nothing more to tell you to-day.

[7] It is said he meant Dr. Young; and that he laughed at his frequent absence of mind: to which, but not with affectation, he was subject.

LETTER V.

THE ANSWER.

You should have my day too, Sir, but indeed I slept it out, and so I'll give you all that was left, my last Night's entertainment. You know the company. I went in late, in order to be better received; but unluckily came in, as Deuce-ace was flinging (Lord H. would say I came in the Nick). The lady coloured, and the men took the name of the Lord in vain; nobody spoke to me, and I sat down disappointed: then affecting a careless air, gaped, and cried seven or eight times, *D'ye win or lose?* I could safely say at that moment I had no temptation to any one of the seven lively sins; and, in the innocent way I was, happy had it been for me, if I had died! Moralizing sat I by the hazard-table; I looked upon the uncertainty of riches, the decay of beauty, and the crash of worlds, with as much contempt as ever Plato did. But ah! the frailty of human nature! some ridiculous thought came into my head, wakened my passions, which burst forth into a violent laughter: I rose from my seat, and not considering the just resentments of the losing gamesters, hurled a ball of paper cross the table, which stopped the dice, and turned up seven instead of five. Cursed on all sides, and not knowing where to fly, I threw myself into a chair, which I demolished, and never spoke a word after. We went to supper, and a lady said, *Miss* G. *looks prodigiously like a Tree.* Every body agreed to

it, and I had not curiosity to ask the meaning of that sprightly fancy: find it out, and let me know. Adieu, 'tis time to dress, and begin the business of the day.

LETTER VI.

IN THE STYLE OF A LADY.

PRAY what is your opinion of *Fate?* For I must confess I am one of those that believe in Fate and Predestination.—No, I can't go so far as that, but I own I am of opinion one's stars may incline, though not compel one; and that is a sort of free-will; for we may be able to resist inclination, but not compulsion.

Don't you think they have got into the most preposterous fashion this winter that ever was, of flouncing the petticoat so very deep, that it looks like an entire coat of lutestring?

It is a little cool indeed for this time of year, but then, my dear, you will allow it has an extreme clean, pretty look.

Ay, so has my muslin apron; but I would not chuse to make it a winter suit of cloaths.

Well now I'll swear, child, you have put me in mind of a very pretty dress; let me die if I don't think a muslin flounce, made very full, would give one a very agreeable *Flirtation*-air.

Well, I swear it would be charming! and I should like it of all things—Do you think there are any such things as *Spirits?*

Do you believe there is any such place as the Elysian Fields; O Gad, that would be charming! I wish I were to go to the Elysian Fields when I die, and then I should not care if I were to leave the world to-morrow: but is one to meet there with what one has loved most in this world?

Now you must tell me this positively. To be sure you can, or what do I correspond with you for, if you will not tell me all? you know I abominate Reserve.

LETTER VII.

Bath, 1714.

You are to understand, Madam, that my passion for your fair self and your sister, has been divided with the most wonderful regularity in the world. Even from my infancy I have been in love with one after the other of you, week by week, and my journey to Bath fell out in the three hundred seventy-sixth week of the reign of my sovereign Lady Sylvia. At the present writing hereof it is the three hundred eighty-ninth week of the reign of your most serene majesty, in whose service I was listed some weeks before I beheld your sister. This information will account for my writing to either of you hereafter, as either shall happen to be queen-regent at that time.

Pray tell your sister, all the good qualities and virtuous inclinations she has, never gave me so much

pleasure in her conversation, as that one vice of her obstinacy will give me mortification this month. Ratcliffe commands her to the Bath, and she refuses! indeed if I were in Berkshire I should honour her for this obstinacy, and magnify her no less for disobedience than we do the Barcelonians. But people change with the change of places (as we see of late), and virtues become vices when they cease to be for one's interest, with me, as with others.

Yet let me tell her, she will never look so finely while she is upon earth, as she would here in the water. It is not here as in most other instances, for those ladies that would please extremely, must go out of their own element. She does not make half so good a figure on horseback as Christina Queen of Sweden; but were she once seen in the Bath, no man would part with her for the best mermaid in Christendom. You know I have seen you often, I perfectly know how you look in black and in white, I have experienced the utmost you can do in colours; but all your movements, all your graceful steps, deserve not half the glory you might here attain, of a moving and easy behaviour in buckram; something between swimming and walking, free enough, and more modestly-half-naked than you can appear any where else. You have conquered enough already by land; show your ambition, and vanquish also by water. The buckram I mention is a dress peculiarly useful at this time, when, we are told, they are bringing over the fashion of German ruffs; you ought to use yourself to some degrees of stiffness before-hand; and when our ladies' chins have been tickled a-while with starched muslin

and wire, they may possibly bear the brush of a German beard and whisker.

I could tell you a delightful story of Dr. P. but want room to display it in all its shining circumstances. He had heard it was an excellent cure for love, to kiss the aunt of the person beloved, who is generally of years and experience enough to damp the fiercest flame; he try'd this course in his passion, and kissed Mrs. E— at Mr. D—'s, but, he says, it will not do, and that he loves you as much as ever.

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

TO THE SAME.

If you ask how the waters agree with me, I must tell you, so very well, that I question how you and I should agree if we were in a room by ourselves. Mrs. —— has honestly assured me, that but for some whims which she can't entirely conquer, she would go and see the world with me in man's cloaths. Even you, Madam, I fancy (if you would not partake in our adventures), would wait our coming in at the evening with some impatience, and be well enough pleased to hear them by the fire-side. That would be better than reading romances, unless Lady M. would be our historian. What raises these desires in me, is an acquaintance I am beginning with my Lady Sandwich, who has all the spirit of the last age, and all the gay experience of a pleasurable life. It were as scandalous an omission to come to the Bath, and not see my Lady

Sandwich, as it had formerly been to have travelled to Rome without visiting the Queen of Sweden. She is, in a word, the best thing this country has to boast of; and as she has been all that a woman of spirit could be, so she still continues that easy and independent creature that a sensible woman always will be.

I must tell you the truth, which is not, however, much to my credit. I never thought so much of yourself and your sister, as since I have been fourscore miles distant from you. In the Forest I looked upon you as good neighbours, at London as pretty kind of women, but here as divinities, angels, goddesses, or what you will. In the same manner I never knew at what rate I valued your life till you were upon the point of dying. If Mr. —— and you will but fall very sick every season, I shall certainly die for you. Seriously I value you both so much, that I esteem others much the less for your sakes; you have robbed me of the pleasure of esteeming a thousand pretty qualities in them, by showing me so many finer in yourselves. There are but two things in the world which could make you indifferent to me, which, I believe, you are not capable of, I mean ill-nature and malice. I have seen enough of you, not to overlook any frailty you could have, and nothing less than a vice could make me like you less. I expect you should discover by my conduct towards you both, that this is true, and that therefore you should pardon a thousand things in me for that one disposition. Expect nothing from me but truth and freedom, and I shall always be thought by you, what I always am,

Your, etc.

LETTER IX.

TO THE SAME.

1714.

I RETURNED home as slow and as contemplative after I had parted from you, as my Lord * retired from the Court and glory to his Country-seat and wife, a week ago. I found here a dismal desponding letter from the son of another great courtier who expects the same fate, and who tells me the great ones of the earth will now take it very kindly of the mean ones, if they will favour them with a visit by day-light. With what joy would they lay down all their schemes of glory, did they but know you have the generosity to drink their healths once a day, as soon as they are fallen? Thus the unhappy, by the sole merit of their misfortunes, become the care of Heaven and you. I intended to have put this last into verse, but in this age of ingratitude my best friends forsake me, I mean my rhymes.

I desire Mrs. P—— to stay her stomach with these half hundred Plays, till I can procure her a Romance big enough to satisfy her great soul with adventures. As for Novels, I fear she can depend upon none from me but that of my Life, which I am still, as I have been, contriving all possible methods to shorten, for the greater ease both of the historian and the reader. May she believe all the passion and tenderness expressed in these Romances to be but a faint image of what I bear her, and may you (who read nothing) take the same truth upon hearing it from me. You

will both injure me very much, if you don't think me a truer friend, than ever any romantic lover, or any imitator of their style could be.

The days of beauty are as the days of greatness, and so long all the world are your adorers. I am one of those unambitious people, who will love you forty years hence when your eyes begin to twinkle in a retirement, and without the vanity which every one now will take to be thought

Your, etc.

LETTER X.

THE more I examine my own mind, the more romantic I find myself. Methinks it is a noble spirit of contradiction to Fate and Fortune, not to give up those that are snatched from us; but to follow them the more, the farther they are removed from the sense of it. Sure, Flattery never travelled so far as three thousand miles; it is now only for Truth, which overtakes all things, to reach you at this distance. 'Tis a generous piece of Popery, that pursues even those who are to be eternally absent, into another world; whether you think it right or wrong, you'll own the very extravagance a sort of piety. I can't be satisfied with strowing flowers over you, and barely honouring you as a thing lost: but must consider you as a glorious, though remote being, and be sending addresses after you. You have carried away so much of me, that what remains is daily languishing and dying over my acquaintance here,

and, I believe, in three or four months more I shall think *Aurat Bazar*[8] as good a place as *Covent Garden*. You may imagine this is raillery, but I am really so far gone as to take pleasure in reveries of this kind. Let them say I am romantic, so is every one said to be, that either admires a fine thing or does one. On my conscience, as the world goes, 'tis hardly worth any body's while to do one for the honour of it: Glory, the only pay of generous actions, is now as ill paid as other just debts; and neither Mrs. Macfarland for immolating her lover, nor you, for constancy to your lord, must ever hope to be compared to Lucretia or Portia.

I write this in some anger: for having, since you went, frequented those people most, who seemed most in your favour, I heard nothing that concerned you talked of so often, as that you went away in a black full-bottomed wig; which I did not assert to be a bob, and was answered, *Love is blind.* I am persuaded your wig had never suffered this criticism, but on the score of your head, and the two eyes that are in it.

Pray, when you write to me, talk of yourself; there is nothing I so much desire to hear of; talk a great deal of yourself; that she who I always thought talked best, may speak upon the best subject. The shrines and reliques you tell me of no way engage my curiosity; I had ten times rather go on pilgrimage to see one such face as yours, than both St. John Baptist's heads. I wish (since you are grown so co-

[8] At Constantinople.

vetous of golden things) you had not only all the fine statues you talk of, but even the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up, provided you were to travel no farther than you could carry it.

The court of Vienna is very edifying. The ladies, with respect to their husbands, seem to understand that text literally, that commands to *bear one another's burthens:* but, I fancy, many a man there is like *Issachar*, an *ass* between *two burthens*. I shall look upon you no more as a Christian, when you pass from that charitable court to the land of jealousy. I expect to hear an exact account how, and at what places, you leave one of the thirty-nine articles after another, as you approach to the lands of infidelity. Pray how far are you got already? Amidst the pomp of a high mass and the ravishing trills of a Sunday opera, what did you think of the doctrine and discipline of the church of England? Had you from your heart a reverence for Sternhold and Hopkins? How did your Christian virtues hold out in so long a voyage[9]? You have it seems (without passing the bounds of Christendom) out-travelled the sin of fornication: in a little time you'll look upon some others with more patience, than the ladies here are capable of. I reckon, you'll time it so well as to make your religion last to the verge of Christendom, that you may

[9] This letter, in which there is much cold and insipid raillery, and many strokes of idle levity, is written to Lady Wortley Montague, who was then pursuing her journey to Constantinople; whose letters from Turkey, it must be candidly confessed, for the curious information they contain, and for that ease and elegance which constitute the essence and the excellence of the epistolary style, are far superior to the letters of Pope.

discharge your Chaplain (as humanity requires) in a place where he may find some business.

I doubt not but I shall be told (when I come to follow you through those countries) in how pretty a manner you accommodated yourself to the customs of the true Musselmen. They will tell me at what town you practised to sit on the Sopha, at what village you learned to fold a Turbant, where you was bathed and anointed, and where you parted with your black full-bottom. How happy must it be for a gay young woman, to live in a country where it is a part of religious worship to be *giddy-headed!* I shall hear at Belgrade how the good Bashaw received you with tears of joy, how he was charmed with your agreeable manner of pronouncing the words *Allah* and *Muhamed;* and how earnestly you joined with him in exhorting your friend to embrace that religion. But I think his objection was a just one, that it was attended with some circumstances under which he could not properly represent his Britannic Majesty.

Lastly, I shall hear how, the first night you lay at Pera, you had a vision of Mahomet's Paradise; and happily awaked without a soul, from which blessed moment the beautiful body was left at full liberty to perform all the agreeable functions it was made for.

I see I have done in this letter as I have often done in your company, talked myself into a good humour, when I begun in an ill one; the pleasure of addressing to you makes me run on, and 'tis in your own power to shorten this letter as much as you please, by giving over when you please; so I'll make it no longer by apologies.

LETTER XI.

You have asked me news a hundred times at the first word you spoke to me, which some would interpret as if you expected nothing better from my lips: and truly 'tis not a sign two lovers are together, when they can be so impertinent as to enquire what the world does. All I mean by this is, that either you or I are not in love with the other: I leave you to guess which of the two is that stupid and insensible creature, so blind to the other's excellencies and charms?

This then shall be a letter of news; and sure, if you did not think me the humblest creature in the world, you would never imagine a Poet could dwindle to a brother of Dawks and Dyer, from a rival of Tate and Brady.

The Earl of Oxford has behaved so bravely, that in this act at least he might seem above man, if he had not just now voided a stone to prove him subject to human infirmities. The utmost weight of affliction from ministerial power and popular hatred, were almost worth bearing, for the glory of such a dauntless conduct as he has ever shewn under it.

You may soon have your wish, to enjoy the gallant sights of armies, incampments, standards waving over your brother's corn fields, and the pretty windings of the Thames stained with the blood of men. Your barbarity, which I have heard so long exclaimed against in town and country, may have its fill of de-

struction. I would not add one circumstance usual in all descriptions of calamity, that of the many rapes committed, or to be committed upon those unfortunate women that *delight in war*. But God forgive me—in this martial age, if I could, I would buy a regiment for your sake and Mrs. P——'s and some others, whom, I have cause to fear, no fair means will prevail upon.

Those eyes, that care not how much mischief is done, or how great slaughter committed, so they have but a fine show; those very female eyes, will be infinitely delighted with the camp which is speedily to be formed in Hyde-park. The tents are carried thither this morning, new regiments, with new cloaths and furniture (far exceeding the late cloth and linen designed by his Grace for the soldiery.) The sight of so many gallant fellows, with all the pomp and glare of war, yet undeformed by battles, those scenes which England has for many years only beheld on stages, may possibly invite your curiosity to this place.

By our latest account from Duke-street, Westminster, the conversion of T. G. Esq. is reported in a manner somewhat more particular. That upon the seizure of his Flanders mares, he seemed more than ordinarily disturbed for some hours, sent for his ghostly father, and resolved to bear his loss like a Christian; till about the hours of seven or eight the coaches and horses of several of the Nobility passing by his window towards Hyde-park, he could no longer endure the disappointment, but instantly went out, took the oath of abjuration, and recovered his

dear horses, which carried him in triumph to the ring. The poor distressed Roman Catholics, now unhorsed and unharioted, cry out with the Psalmist, *Some in Chariots and some on Horses, but we will invocate the name of the Lord.*

I am, etc.

LETTER XII.

THE weather is too fine for any one that loves the country to leave it at this season: when every smile of the sun, like the smile of a coy lady, is as dear as it is uncommon: and I am so much in the taste of rural pleasures, I had rather see the sun than any thing he can shew me, except yourself. I despise every fine thing in town, not excepting your new gown, till I see you dressed in it (which by the way I don't like the better for the red; the leaves, I think, are very pretty.) I am growing fit, I hope, for a better world, of which the light of the sun is but a shadow: for I doubt not but God's works here are what come nearest to his works there: and that a true relish of the beauties of nature is the most easy preparation and gentlest transition to an enjoyment of those of heaven: as on the contrary, a true town-life of hurry, confusion, noise, slander, and dissention, is a sort of apprenticeship to hell and its furies. I am endeavouring to put my mind into as quiet a situation as I can, to be ready to receive that stroke which, I

believe, is coming upon me, and have fully resigned myself to yield to it. The separation of my soul and body is what I could think of with less pain; for I am very sure he that made it will take care of it, and in whatever state he pleases it shall be, that state must be right: but I cannot think without tears of being separated from my friends, when their condition is so doubtful, that they may want even such assistance as mine. Sure, it is more merciful to take from us after death all memory of what we loved or pursued here: for else what a torment would it be to a spirit, still to love those creatures it is quite divided from? Unless we suppose, that in a more exalted life, all that we esteemed in this imperfect state will affect us no more, than what we loved in our infancy concerns us now.

This is an odd way of writing to a lady, and, I am sensible, would throw me under a great deal of ridicule, were you to shew this letter among your acquaintance. But perhaps you may not yourself be quite a stranger to this way of thinking. I heartily wish your life may be so long and so happy, as never to let you think *quite so far* as I am now led to do; but to think *a little towards it*, is what will make you the happier, and the easier at all times.

There are no pleasures or amusements that I do not wish you, and therefore 'tis no small grief to me that I shall for the future be less able to partake with you in them. But let fortune do her worst, whatever she makes us lose, as long as she never makes us lose our honesty and our independance; I despise from

my heart whoever parts with the first, and pity from my soul whoever quits the latter.

I am grieved at Mr. Gay's condition in this last respect of dependance. He has Merit, Good-nature, and Integrity, three qualities, that I fear are too often lost upon great men; or at least are not all three a match for one which is opposed to them, Flattery. I wish it may not soon or late displace him from the favour he now possesses, and seems to like. I am sure his late action deserves eternal favour and esteem: Lord Bathurst was charmed with it, who came hither to see me before his journey. He asked and spoke very particularly of you. To-morrow Mr. Fortescue comes to me from London about B——'s suit *in forma pauperis*. That poor man looks starved: he tells me you have been charitable to him. Indeed 'tis wanted; the poor creature can scarce stir or speak; and I apprehend he will die, just as he gets something to live upon. Adieu.

LETTER XIII.

This is a day of wishes for you, and I hope you have long known, there is not one good one which I do not form in your behalf. Every year that passes, I wish some things more for my friends, and some things less for myself. Yet were I to tell you what I wish for you in particular, it would be only to repeat in prose, what I told you last year in rhyme (so sincere is my poetry): I can only add, that as I then

wished you a friend[9], I now wish that friend were Mrs. ——

Absence is a short kind of death; and in either, one can only wish, that the friends we are separated from may be happy with those that are left them. I am therefore very solicitous that you may pass much agreeable time together: I am sorry to say I envy you no other companion; though I hope you have others that you like; and I am always pleased in that hope, when it is not attended with any fears on your own account.

I was troubled to leave you both, just as I fancied we should begin to live together in the country. 'Twas a little like dying the moment one had got all one desired in this world. Yet I go away with one generous sort of satisfaction, that what I part with, you are to inherit.

I know you would both be pleased to hear some certain news of a friend departed; to have the adventures of his passage, and the new regions through which he travelled, described; and, upon the whole, to know that he is as happy where he now is, as while he lived among you. But indeed I (like many a poor unprepared soul) have seen nothing I like so well as what I left: no scenes of Paradise, no happy bowers, equal to those on the banks of the Thames. Where-ever I wander, one reflection strikes me: I wish you were as free as I; or at least had a tie as tender, and as reasonable as mine, to a relation that

[9] *To Mrs. Blount on her Birth-day.*

"O be thou blest with all that Heav'n can send,
Long health, long youth, long pleasure, and a *friend.* W.

as well deserved your constant thought, and to whom you would be always pulled back (in such a manner as I am) by the heart-string. I have never been well since I set out: but don't tell my mother so; it will trouble her too much: and as probably the same reason may prevent her sending a true account of her health to me, I must desire you to acquaint me. I would gladly hear the country air improves your own; but don't flatter me when you are ill, that I may be the better satisfied when you say you are well: for these are things in which one may be sincerer to a reasonable friend, than to a fond and partial parent. Adieu.

LETTER XIV.

You cannot be surprized to find him a dull correspondent whom you have known so long for a dull companion. And though I am pretty sensible, that if I have any wit, I may as well write to show it, as not; yet I will content myself with giving you as plain a history of my pilgrimage, as Purchas himself, or as John Bunyan could do of his *walking through the wilderness of this world*, etc.

First then I went by water to Hampton-Court, unattended by all but my own virtues; which were not of so modest a nature as to keep themselves, or me, concealed: for I met the Prince with all his ladies on horseback, coming from hunting. Mrs. B* and Mrs. L* took me into protection, (contrary to the

laws against harbouring Papists,) and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better, an opportunity of conversation with Mrs. H*. We all agreed that the life of a Maid of Honour was of all things the most miserable: and wished that every woman who envied it, had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in a morning, ride over hedges[1] and ditches on borrowed hacks, come home in the heat of the day with a fever, and (what is worse a hundred times) with a red mark in the forehead from an uneasy hat; all this may qualify them to make excellent wives for fox-hunters, and bear abundance of ruddy complexioned children. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simper an hour and catch cold in the Princess's apartment: from thence (as Shakespear has it) to *dinner, with what appetite they may*——and after that, till midnight, walk, work, or think, which they please. I can easily believe, no lone-house in Wales, with a mountain and a rookery, is more contemplative than this Court; and as a proof of it I need only tell you, Mrs. L* walked with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality but the King, who gave audience to the vice-chamberlain, all alone, under the garden-wall.

In short, I heard of no ball, assembly, basset-table, or any place where two or three were gathered together, except Madam Kilmansegg's, to which I had the honour to be invited, and the grace to stay away.

[1] At this time it was the fashion for ladies of distinction to ride a hunting in Windsor forest: as it is at present to drive ponies.

I was heartily tired, and posted to —— park: there we had an excellent discourse of quackery; Dr. S. was mentioned with honour. Lady —— walked a whole hour abroad without dying after it, at least in the time I stayed, though she seemed to be fainting, and had convulsive motions several times in her head.

I arrived in the forest by Tuesday noon, having fled from the face (I wish I could say the horned face) of Moses, who dined in the midway thither. I passed the rest of the day in those woods where I have so often enjoyed a book and a friend; I made a Hymn as I passed through, which ended with a sigh, that I will not tell you the meaning of.

Your Doctor is gone the way of all his patients, and was hard put to it how to dispose of an estate miserably unwieldy, and splendidly unuseful to him. Sir Samuel Garth says, that for Ratcliffe to leave[2] a library, was as if a Eunuch should found a Seraglio. Dr. S—— lately told a Lady, he wondered she could be alive after him: she made answer, she wondered at it for two reasons, because Dr. Ratcliffe was dead, and because Dr. S—— was living. I am

Your, etc.

[2] Because it was notorious that he had little learning; but he possessed what was better, wonderful sagacity and penetration in judging of diseases. Dr. Young has the same simile in his second satire:

> Unlearned men of Books assume the care,
> As Eunuchs are the guardians of the Fair.

LETTER XV.

NOTHING could have more of that melancholy which once used to please me, than my last day's journey; for after having passed through my favourite woods in the forest, with a thousand reveries of past pleasures, I rid over hanging hills, whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet watered with winding rivers, listening to the falls of cataracts below, and the murmuring of the winds above: the gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these; and then the shades of the evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company, or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reached Oxford, all the bells tolled in different notes; the clocks of every college answered one another, and sounded forth (some in a deeper, some a softer tone) that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since, among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone porticos, studious walks, and solitary scenes of the university. I wanted nothing but a black gown and a salary, to be as mere a book-worm as any there. I conformed myself to the college hours, was rolled up in books, lay in one of the most ancient dusky parts of the University, and was as dead to the world as any hermit of the desart. If any thing was alive or awake in me, it was a little vanity, such as even those good men used to enter-

tain, when the monks *of their own order* extolled their piety and abstraction. For I found myself received with a sort of respect, which this idle part of mankind, the learned, pay to their own species; who are as considerable here, as the busy, the gay, and the ambitious, are in your world.

Indeed I was treated in such a manner, that I could not but sometimes ask myself in my mind, what college I was founder of, or what library I had built? Methinks, I do very ill to return to the world again, to leave the only place where I make a figure, and, from seeing myself seated with dignity on the most conspicuous shelves of a library, put myself into the abject posture of lying at a lady's feet in St. James's-square.

I will not deny, but that like Alexander, in the midst of my glory I am wounded, and find myself a mere man. To tell you from whence the dart comes, is to no purpose, since neither of you will take the tender care to draw it out of my heart, and suck the poison with your lips.

Here, at my Lord H——'s, I see a creature nearer an angel than a woman (though a woman be very near as good as an angel); I think you have formerly heard me mention Mrs. T—— as a credit to the Maker of angels: she is a relation of his lordship's, and he gravely proposed her to me for a wife; being tender of her interests, and knowing (what is a shame to Providence) that she is less indebted to fortune than I. I told him, 'twas what he never could have thought of, if it had not been his misfortune to be

blind; and what I never could think of while I had eyes to see both her and myself.

I must not conclude without telling you, that I will do the utmost in the affair you desire. It would be an inexpressible joy to me if I could serve you, and I will always do all I can to give myself pleasure. I wish as well for you as for myself; I am in love with you both, as much as I am with myself, for I find myself most so with either, when I least suspect it.

LETTER XVI.

THE chief cause I have to repent my leaving the town, is the uncertainty I am in every day of your sister's state of health. I really expected by every post to have heard of her recovery, but on the contrary each letter has been a new awakening to my apprehensions, and I have ever since suffered alarms upon alarms on her account. No one can be more sensibly touched at this than I; nor any danger of any I love could affect me with more uneasiness. I have felt some weaknesses of a tender kind, which I would not be free from; and I am glad to find my value for people so rightly placed, as to perceive them on this occasion.

I cannot be so good a Christian as to be willing to resign my own happiness here, for hers in another life. I do more than wish for her safety, for every wish I make I find immediately changed into a

prayer, and a more fervent one than I had learned to make till now.

May her life be longer and happier than perhaps herself may desire, that is, as long and as happy as you can wish: may her beauty be as great as possible, that is, as it always was, or as yours is. But whatever ravages a merciless distemper may commit, I dare promise her boldly, what few (if any) of her makers of visits and compliments dare to do: she shall have one man as much her admirer as ever. As for your part, Madam, you have me so more than ever, since I have been a witness to the generous tenderness you have shewn upon this occasion.

Your, etc.

LETTER XVII.

I AM not at all concerned to think that this letter may be less entertaining than some I have sent: I know you are a friend that will think a kind letter as good as a diverting one. He that gives you his mirth makes a much less present than he that gives you his heart; and true friends would rather see such thoughts as they communicate only to one another, than what they squander about to all the world. They who can set a right value upon any thing, will prize one tender, well-meant word, above all that ever made them laugh in their lives. If I did not think so of you, I should never have taken much pains to endeavour to please you, by writing, or any thing

else. Wit, I am sure, I want; at least in the degree that I see others have it, who would at all seasons alike be entertaining; but I would willingly have some qualities that may be (at some seasons) of more comfort to myself, and of more service to my friends. I would cut off my own head, if it had nothing better than wit in it; and tear out my own heart, if it had no better dispositions than to love only myself, and laugh at all my neighbours.

I know you will think it an agreeable thing to hear that I have done a great deal of Homer. If it be tolerable, the world may thank you for it: for if I could have seen you every day, and imagined my company could have every day pleased you, I should scarce have thought it worth my while to please the world. How many verses could I gladly have left unfinished, and turned into it, for people to say what they would of, had I been permitted to pass all those hours more pleasingly? Whatever some may think, Fame is a thing I am much less covetous of than your Friendship; for that, I hope, will last all my life; the other I cannot answer for. What if they should both grow greater after my death? alas! they would both be of no advantage to me? Therefore think upon it, and love me as well as ever you can, while I live.

Now I talk of fame, I send you my Temple of Fame, which is just come out: but my sentiments about it you will see better by this Epigram:

> What's Fame with Men, by custom of the Nation,
> Is call'd in Women only Reputation:
> About them both why keep we such a pother?
> Part you with one, and I'll renounce the other.

LETTER XVIII.

ALL the pleasure or use of familiar letters, is to give us the assurance of a friend's welfare; at least 'tis all I know, who am a mortal enemy and despiser of what they call fine letters. In this view, I promise you, it will always be a satisfaction to me to write letters and to receive them from you; because I unfeignedly have your good at my heart, and am that thing, which many people make only a subject to display their fine sentiments upon, a Friend: which is a character that admits of little to be said, till something may be done. Now let me fairly tell you, I don't like your style: 'tis very pretty, therefore I don't like it; and if you writ as well as Voiture, I would not give a farthing for such letters, unless I were to sell them to be printed. Methinks I have lost the Mrs. L* I formerly knew, who writ and talked like other people (and sometimes better). You must allow me to say, you have not said a sensible word in all your letter, except where you speak of shewing kindness and expecting it in return: but the addition you make about your being but two and twenty, is again in the style of wit and abomination. To shew you how very unsatisfactorily you write, in all your letters you've never told me how you do. Indeed I see it was absolutely necessary for me to write to you, before you continued to take more notice of me, for I ought to tell you what you are to expect; that is to say, Kindness, which I never failed (I hope)

to return; and not Wit, which if I want I am not much concerned, because judgment is a better thing; and if I had, I would make use of it rather to play upon those I despised, than to trifle with those I loved. You see, in short, after what manner you may most agreeably write to me: tell me you are my friend, and you can be no more at a loss about that article. As I have opened my mind upon this to you, it may also serve for Mr. H——, who will see by it what manner of letters he must expect if he corresponds with me. As I am too seriously yours and his servant to put turns upon you instead of good wishes, so in return I would have nothing but honest plain Howd'ye's and Pray remember me's; which not being fit to be shown to any body for wit, may be a proof we correspond only for ourselves, in mere friendliness; as doth, God is my witness,

Your, etc.

LETTER XIX.

It is with infinite satisfaction I am made acquainted that your brother will at last prove your relation, and has entertained such sentiments as became him in your concern. I have been prepared for this by degrees, having several times received from Mrs. * that which is one of the greatest pleasures, the knowledge that others entered into my own sentiments concerning you. I ever was of opinion that you wanted no more to be vindicated than to be

known. As I have often condoled with you in your adversities, so I have a right, which but few can pretend to, of congratulating on the prospect of your better fortunes: and I hope, for the future, to have the concern I have felt for you overpaid in your felicities. Though you modestly say the world has left you, yet, I verily believe, it is coming to you again as fast as it can: for, to give the world its due, it is always very fond of Merit when 'tis past its power to oppose it. Therefore, if you can, take it into favour again upon its repentance, and continue in it. But if you are resolved in revenge to rob the world of so much example as you may afford it, I believe, your design will be vain; for even in a monastery your devotions cannot carry you so far toward the next world as to make this lose the sight of you; but you'll be like a star, that, while it is fixed to heaven, shines over all the earth.

Wheresoever Providence shall dispose of the most valuable thing I know, I shall ever follow you with my sincerest wishes, and my best thoughts will be perpetually waiting upon you when you never hear of me nor them. Your own guardian angels cannot be more constant, nor more silent. I beg you will never cease to think me your friend, that you may not be guilty of that which you never yet knew to commit an injustice. As I have hitherto been so in spite of the world, so hereafter, if it be possible you should ever be more opposed, and more deserted, I should only be so much the more

Your faithful, etc.

LETTER XX.

I CAN say little to recommend the letters I shall write to you, but that they will be the most impartial representations of a free heart, and the truest copies you ever saw, though of a very mean original. Not a feature will be softened, or any advantageous light employed to make the ugly thing a little less hideous; but you shall find it in all respects, most horribly like. You will do me an injustice if you look upon any thing I shall say from this instant, as a compliment either to you or to myself; whatever I write will be the real thought of that hour; and I know you'll no more expect it of me to persevere till death, in every sentiment or notion I now set down, than you would imagine a man's face should never change when once his picture was drawn.

The freedom I shall use in this manner of *thinking aloud*, may indeed prove me a fool: but it will prove me one of the best sort of fools, the honest ones. And since what folly we have, will infallibly buoy up at one time or other in spite of all our art to keep it down; methinks, 'tis almost foolish to take any pains to conceal it at all, and almost knavish to do it from those that are our friends. If Momus's project had taken, of having windows in our breasts, I should be for carrying it farther, and making those windows casements; that while a man showed his heart to all the world, he might do something more for his friends; even give it them, and trust it to their handling. I think I love you as well as

King Herod did Herodias, (though I never had so much as one dance with you,) and would as freely give you my heart in a dish, as he did another's head. But since Jupiter will not have it so, I must be content to shew my taste in life, as I do my taste in painting, by loving to have as little drapery as possible. Not that I think every body naked altogether so fine a sight, as yourself and a few more would be, but because 'tis good to use people to what they must be acquainted with: and there will certainly come some day of judgment or other, to uncover every soul of us. We shall then see that the prudes of this world owed all their fine figure only to their being straiter-laced than the rest; and that they are naturally as arrant squabs as those that went more loose, nay as those that never girded their loins at all.—But a particular reason that may engage you to write your thoughts the more freely to me, is, that I am confident no one knows you better; for I find, when others express their thoughts of you, they fall very short of mine, and, I know, at the same, theirs are such as you would think sufficiently in your favour.

You may easily imagine how desirous I must be of a correspondence with a person, who had taught me long ago that it was as possible to esteem at first sight, as to love: and who has since ruined me for all the conversation of one sex, and almost all the friendship of the other. I am but too sensible through your means, that the company of men wants a certain softness to recommend it, and that of women wants every thing else. How often have I been quietly going to take possession of that tranquillity

and indolence I had so long found in the Country; when one evening of your conversation has spoiled me for a Solitaire! Books have lost their effect upon me, and I was convinced since I saw you, that there is one alive wiser than all the sages. A plague of female wisdom! it makes a man ten times more uneasy than his own. What is very strange, Virtue herself (when you have the dressing her) is too amiable for one's repose. You might have done a world of good in your time, if you had allowed half the fine gentlemen who have seen you, to have conversed with you: they would have been strangely bit, while they thought only to fall in love with a fair lady, and you had bewitched them with Reason and Virtue (two beauties that the very fops pretend to no acquaintance with).

The unhappy distance at which we correspond, removes a great many of those restrictions and punctilious decorums, that oftentimes in nearer conversation prejudice truth, to save good-breeding. I may now hear of my faults, and you of your good qualities, without a blush; we converse upon such unfortunate generous terms, as exclude the regards of fear, shame, or design, in either of us. And, methinks it would be as paultry a part, to impose (even in a single thought) upon each other in this state of separation, as for spirits of a different sphere, who have so little intercourse with us, to employ that little (as some would make us think they do) in putting tricks and delusions upon poor mortals.

Let me begin then, Madam, by asking you a question that may enable me to judge better of my own con-

duct than most instances of my life. In what manner did I behave in the last hour I saw you? What degree of concern did I discover, when I felt a misfortune, which, I hope, you will never feel, that of parting from what one most esteems? for if my parting looked but like that of your common acquaintance, I am the greatest of all the hypocrites that ever decency made.

I never since pass by your house but with the same sort of melancholy that we feel upon seeing the tomb of a friend, which only serves to put us in mind of what we have lost. I reflect upon the circumstances of your departure, which I was there a witness of, (your behaviour in what I may call your last moments,) and I indulge a gloomy kind of pleasure in thinking that those last moments were given to me. I would fain imagine that this was not accidental, but proceeded from a penetration, which, I know, you have, in finding out the truth of people's sentiments; and that you are willing, the last man that *would have* parted from you, should be the last that *did.* I really looked upon you just as the friends of Curtius might have done upon that Hero, at the instant when he was devoting himself to glory, and running to be lost out of generosity: I was obliged to admire your resolution, in as great a degree as I deplored it: and had only to wish, that heaven would reward so much virtue as was to be taken from us, with all the felicities it could enjoy elsewhere!

I am, etc.

LETTER XXI.

I CAN never have too many of your letters. I am angry at every scrap of paper lost, and though it is but an odd compliment to compare a fine lady to a Sibyl, your leaves, methinks, like hers, are too good to be committed to the winds; though I have no other way of receiving them but by those unfaithful messengers. I have had but three, and I reckon that short one from D——, which was rather a dying ejaculation than a letter.

You have contrived to say in your last the two things most pleasing to me: the first, that whatever be the fate of your letters, you will continue to write in the discharge of your conscience. The other is, the justice you do me, in taking what I write to you in the serious manner it was meant; it is the point upon which I can bear no suspicion, and in which, above all, I desire to be thought serious. It would be vexatious indeed, if you should pretend to take that for wit, which is no more than the natural overflowing of a heart improved by an esteem for you; but since you tell me you believe me, I fancy my expressions have not been entirely unfaithful to my thoughts.

May your faith be encreased in all truths, that are as great as this; and depend upon it, to whatever degree it may extend, you never can be a bigot.

If you could see the heart I talk of, you would readily think it a foolish good kind of thing, with

some qualities as well-deserving to be half-laughed at, and half-esteemed, as most hearts in the world.

Its grand *foible* in regard to you, is the most like Reason of any *foible* in nature. Upon my word, this heart is not like a great warehouse, stored only with my own goods, or with empty spaces to be supplied as fast as Interest or Ambition can fill them: but is every inch of it let out into lodgings for its friends, and shall never want a corner where your idea will always lie as warm, and as close, as any idea in Christendom.

If this distance (as you are so kind as to say) enlarges your belief of my friendship, I assure you, it has so extended my notion of your value, that I begin to be impious upon that account, and to wish that even slaughter, ruin, and desolation, may interpose between you and the place you design for; and that you were restored to us at the expence of a whole people.

Is there no expedient to return you in peace to the bosom of your country? I hear you are come as far as ——: do you only look back to die twice? Is Eurydice once more snatched to the shades? If ever mortal had reason to hate the King, it is I, whose particular misfortune it is, to be almost the only innocent person he has made to suffer; both by his Government at home, and his Negociations abroad.

If you must go from us, I wish at least you might pass to your banishment by the most pleasant way: that all the road might be roses and myrtles, and a thousand objects rise round you, agreeable enough to make England less desirable to you. It is not

now my interest to wish England agreeable: it is highly probable it may use me ill enough to drive me from it. Can I think that place my country, where I cannot now call a foot of paternal *Earth* my own? Yet it may seem some alleviation, that when the wisest thing I can do is to leave my country, what was most agreeable in it should first be snatched away from it.

I could overtake you with pleasure in —, and make that tour in your company. Every reasonable entertainment and beautiful view would be doubly engaging when you partook of it. I should at least attend you to the sea coasts, and cast a last look after the sails that transported you. But perhaps I might care as little to stay behind you; and be full as uneasy to live in a country where I saw others persecuted by the rogues of my own religion, as where I was persecuted myself by the rogues of yours. And it is not impossible I might run into Asia in search of liberty: for who would not rather live a freeman among a nation of slaves, than a slave among a nation of freemen?

In good earnest, if I knew your motions, and your exact time; I verily think, I should be once more happy in a sight of you next spring.

I'll conclude with a wish, God send you with us, or me with you.

LETTER XXII.

You will find me[3] more troublesome than ever Brutus did his evil Genius; I shall meet you in more places than one, and often refresh your memory before you arrive at your Philippi. These shadows of me (my letters) will be haunting you from time to time, and putting you in mind of the man who has really suffered very much from you, and whom you have robbed of the most valuable of his enjoyments, your conversation. The advantage of hearing your sentiments by discovering mine, was what I always thought a great one, and even worth the risque I generally run of manifesting my own indiscretion. You then rewarded my trust in you the moment it was given, for you pleased and informed me the minute you answered. I must now be contented with more slow returns. However, 'tis some pleasure, that your thoughts upon paper will be a more lasting possession to me, and that I shall no longer have cause to complain of a loss I have so often regretted, that of any thing you said, which I happened to forget. In earnest, Madam, if I were to write to you as often as I think of you, it must be every day of my life. I attend you in spirit through all your ways, I follow you through every stage in books of travels, and fear for you through whole folios; you make me shrink at the past dangers of dead travellers; and if I read of a delightful prospect, or agreeable place, I hope

[3] This and the preceding Letter are to Lady Wortley Montagu.

it yet subsists to please you. I enquire the roads, the amusements, the company, of every town and country through which you pass, with as much diligence, as if I were to set out next week to overtake you. In a word, no one can have you more constantly in mind, not even your Guardian-angel (if you have one); and I am willing to indulge so much popery as to fancy some Being takes care of you, who knows your value better than you do yourself: I am willing to think that Heaven never gave so much self-neglect and resolution to a woman, to occasion her calamity; but am pious enough to believe those qualities must be intended to conduce to her benefit and her glory.

Your first short letter only serves to show me you are alive: it puts me in mind of the first dove that returned to Noah, and just made him know it had found no rest abroad.

There is nothing in it that pleases me, but when you tell me you had no sea-sickness. I beg your next may give me all the pleasure it can, that is, tell me any that you receive. You can make no discoveries that will be half so valuable to me as those of your own mind. Nothing that regards the states or kingdoms you pass through, will engage so much of my curiosity or concern, as what relates to yourself: your welfare, to say truth, is more at my heart than that of Christendom.

I am sure I may defend the truth, though perhaps not the virtue, of this declaration. One is ignorant, or doubtful at best, of the merits of differing religions and governments: but private virtues one can be

sure of. I therefore know what particular Person has desert enough to merit being happier than others, but not what Nation deserves to conquer or oppress another. You will say, I am not *public-spirited;* let it be so, I may have too many tendernesses, particular regards, or narrow views; but at the same time I am certain that whoever wants these, can never have a public spirit; for (as a friend of mine says) how is it possible for that man to love twenty thousand people who never loved one?

I communicated your letter to Mr. C——: he thinks of you and talks of you as he ought, I mean as I do, and one always thinks that to be just as it ought. His health and mine are now so good, that we wish with all our souls you were a witness of it. We never meet but we lament over you: we pay a kind of weekly rites to your memory, where we strow flowers of rhetoric, and offer such libations to your name as it would be profane to call Toasting. The Duke of B———m is sometimes the High Priest of your praises; and upon the whole, I believe there are as few men that are not sorry at your departure, as women that are: for, you know, most of your sex want good sense, and therefore must want generosity: you have so much of both, that, I am sure, you pardon them: for one cannot but forgive whatever one despises. For my part I hate a great many women for your sake, and undervalue all the rest. 'Tis you are to blame, and may God revenge it upon you, with all those blessings and earthly prosperities, which, the Divines tell us, are the cause of our perdition; for if he makes you

happy in this world, I dare trust your own virtue to do it in the other.

I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIII.

TO MRS. ARABELLA FERMOR[1].

ON HER MARRIAGE.

You are by this time satisfied how much the tenderness of one man of merit is to be preferred to the addresses of a thousand. And by this time the gentleman you have made choice of is sensible, how great is the joy of having all those charms and good qualities which have pleased so many, now applied to please one only. It was but just, that the same Virtues which gave you reputation, should give you happiness; and I can wish you no greater, than that you may receive it in as high a degree yourself, as so much good humour must infallibly give it to your husband.

It may be expected, perhaps, that one who has the title of Poet should say something more polite on this occasion: but I am really more a well-wisher to your felicity, than a celebrater of your beauty. Besides, you are now a married woman, and in a way to be a great many better things than

[1] This Letter, though very elegant and well-turned, must yield to Waller's Letter to Saccharissa, on her marriage.

a fine lady; such as an excellent wife, a faithful friend, a tender parent, and at last, as the consequence of them all, a saint in heaven. You ought now to hear nothing but that, which was all you ever desired to hear, (whatever others may have spoken to you,) I mean Truth: and it is with the utmost that I assure you, no friend you have can more rejoice in any good that befals you, is more sincerely delighted with the prospect of your future happiness, or more unfeignedly desires a long continuance of it.

I hope you will think it but just, that a man who will certainly be spoken of as your admirer, after he is dead, may have the happiness to be esteemed, while he is living,

Your, etc.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL[5];

From the Year 1705 to 1716.

LETTER I.

SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL TO MR. POPE.

SIR, October 19, 1705.

I RETURN you the book you were pleased to send me, and with it your obliging letter, which deserves my particular acknowledgment: for, next to the pleasure of enjoying the company of so good a friend, the welcomest thing to me is to hear from him. I expected to find, what I have met with, an admirable genius in those Poems, not only because they were Milton's[6] [7], or were approved by Sir. Hen.

[5] Secretary of State to King William the Third. P.

[6] L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Lycidas, and the Masque of Comus.

[7] From hence it appears, that these four exquisite Poems of Milton were read, and relished, and recommended, by our author, much earlier than they are supposed to have been. He has taken many expressions from them in the *Eloisa* and the *Temple of Fame*, and other pieces. See the Preface to the second edition, 1791, p. 10, of Milton's smaller Poems, by T. Warton. That a

Wooton, but because you had commended them; and give me leave to tell you, that I know nobody so like to equal him, even at the age he wrote most of them, as yourself. Only do not afford more cause of complaints against you, that you suffer nothing of yours to come abroad; which in this age, wherein wit and true sense is more scarce than money, is a piece of such cruelty as your best friends can hardly pardon. I hope you will repent and amend; I could offer many reasons to this purpose, and such as you cannot answer with any sincerity; but that I dare not enlarge; for fear of engaging in a style of Compliment, which has been so abused by fools and knaves, that it is become almost scandalous. I conclude therefore with an assurance which shall never vary, of my being ever, etc.

LETTER II.

FROM SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

April 9, 1708.

I HAVE this moment[8] received the favour of yours of the 8th instant; and will make you a true excuse

person of Trumbull's taste and literature should not have been before acquainted with these Poems of Milton, is a clear proof how little they were known and regarded in general.

[8] There is something particularly pleasing in the letters of this amiable and honest old statesman; they breathe an air of uncommon good temper, good sense, candour, and tranquillity of mind. See particularly Letters III. VI. and VIII. Several

(though perhaps no very good one) that I deferred the troubling you with a letter, when I sent back your papers, in hopes of seeing you at Binfield before this time. If I had met with any fault in your performance, I should freely now (as I have done too presumptuously in conversation with you) tell you my opinion; which I have frequently ventured to give you, rather in compliance with your desires than that I could think it reasonable. For I am not yet satisfied upon what grounds I can pretend to judge of poetry, who never have been practised in the art. There may possibly be some happy genius's, who may judge of some of the natural beauties of a poem, as a man may of the proportions of a building, without having read Vitruvius, or knowing any thing of the rules of architecture; but this, though it may sometimes be in the right, must be subject to many mistakes, and is certainly but a superficial knowledge; without entering into the art, the methods, and the particular excellencies of the whole composure, in all the parts of it.

Besides my want of skill, I have another reason why I ought to suspect myself, by reason of the great affection I have for you; which might give too much bias to be kind to every thing that comes from you. But after all, I must say (and I do it with an old-fashioned sincerity) that I entirely approve of your translation of

curious letters of Sir W. Trumbull, written while he was Embassador in France, are preserved in the Paper-office: and some relating to the cruel Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1685, are published in the Memoirs of Sir John Dalrymple, vol. i. p. 123.

those pieces of Homer, both as to the versification and the true sense that shines through the whole: nay I am confirmed in my former application to you, and give me leave to renew it upon this occasion, that you would proceed[9] in translating that incomparable poet, to make him speak good English, to dress his admirable characters in your proper, significant, and expressive conceptions, and to make his works as useful and instructive to this degenerate age, as he was to our friend Horace, when he read him at *Prœneste: Qui, quid sit pulcrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non*, etc. I break off with that *quid non?* with which I confess I am charmed.

Upon the whole matter I intreat you to send this presently to be added to the Miscellanies, and I hope it will come time enough for that purpose.

I have nothing to say of my Nephew B—'s observations, for he sent them to me so late, that I had not time to consider them; I dare say he endeavoured very faithfully (though, he told me, very hastily) to execute your commands.

All I can add is, that if your excess of modesty should hinder you from publishing this Essay, I shall only be sorry that I have no more credit with you, to persuade you to oblige the public, and very particularly, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

[9] Hence it appears that Sir W. Trumbull was the very first person that urged him to undertake a translation of the Iliad of Homer.

LETTER III.

FROM SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

March 6, 1713.

I THINK a hasty scribble shows more what flows from the heart, than a letter after Balzac's manner[1], in studied phrases; therefore I will tell you as fast as I can, that I have received your favour of the 26th past, with your kind present of the Rape of the Lock. You have given me the truest satisfaction imaginable, not only in making good the just opinion I have ever had of your reach of thought, and my Idea of your comprehensive genius; but likewise in that pleasure I take as an Englishman to see the French, even Boileau himself in his Lutrin, out-done in your poem; for you descend, *leviore plectro*, to all the nicer touches, that your own observation and wit furnish, on such a subject as requires the finest strokes and the liveliest imagination. But I must say no more (though I could a great deal) on what pleases me so much; and henceforth, I hope, you will never condemn me of partiality, since I only swim with the stream, and approve of what all men of good taste (notwithstanding the jarring of parties) must and do universally applaud. I now come to what is of vast moment, I mean the preservation of your health, and beg of you earnestly to get out of all Tavern-company, and fly away *tanquam ex incendio*. What a misery is

[1] I wish our author had attended to this observation.

it for you to be destroyed by the foolish kindness ('tis all one whether real or pretended) of those who are able to bear the poison of bad wine, and to engage you in so unequal a combat? As to Homer, by all I can learn, your business is done: therefore come away and take a little time to breathe in the country. I beg now for my own sake, and much more for yours; methinks Mr. — has said to you more than once,

Heu fuge, nate dea, teque his, ait, eripe flammis!

I am Your, etc.

LETTER IV.

TO SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

March 12, 1713.

THOUGH any thing you write is sure to be a pleasure to me, yet I must own your last letter made me uneasy; you really use a style of compliment, which I expect as little as I deserve it. I know 'tis a common opinion that a young scribbler is as ill pleased to hear truth as a young lady. From the moment one sets up for an author, one must be treated as ceremoniously, that is as unfaithfully,

As a King's favourite, or as a King.

This proceeding, joined to that natural vanity which first makes a man an author, is certainly enough to render him a coxcomb for life. But I must grant it

as a just judgment upon poets, that they whose chief pretence is Wit, should be treated as they themselves treat Fools, that is, be cajoled with praises. And, I believe, Poets are the only poor fellows in the world whom any body will flatter.

I would not be thought to say this, as if the obliging letter you sent me deserved this imputation, only it put me in mind of it; and I fancy one may apply to one's friend what Cæsar said of his wife; 'It was not sufficient that he knew her to be chaste himself, but she should not be so much as suspected.'

As to the wonderful discoveries, and all the good news you are pleased to tell me of myself, I treat it, as you who are in the secret, treat common news, as groundless reports of things at a distance: which I, who look into the true springs of the affair, in my own breast, know to have no foundation at all. For Fame, though it be (as Milton finely calls it) *the last infirmity of noble minds*, is scarce so strong a temptation as to warrant our loss of time here: it can never make us lie down contentedly on a death-bed (as some of the Ancients are said to have done with that thought). You, Sir, have yourself taught me, that an easy situation at that hour can proceed from no ambition less noble than that of an eternal felicity, which is unattainable by the strongest endeavours of the wit, but may be gained by the sincere intentions of the heart only. As in the next world, so in this, the only solid blessings are owing to the goodness of the mind, not the extent of the capacity: friendship here is an emanation from the same source as beatitude is there: the same benevolence and grateful disposi-

tion that qualifies us for the one, if extended farther, makes us partakers of the other. The utmost point of my desires in my present state terminates in the society and good-will of worthy men, which I look upon as no ill earnest and foretaste of the society and alliance of happy souls hereafter.

The continuance of your favours to me is what not only makes me happy, but causes me to set some value upon myself as a part of your care. The instances I daily meet with of these agreeable awakenings of friendship are of too pleasing a nature not to be acknowledged whenever I think of you. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER V.

April 30, 1713.

I HAVE been almost every day employed in following your advice, and amusing myself in painting, in which I am most particularly obliged to Mr. Jervas, who gives me daily instructions and examples. As to poetical affairs, I am content at present to be a bare looker-on, and from a practitioner turn an admirer, which is (as the world goes) not very usual. Cato was not so much [2] the wonder of Rome in his days,

[2] These praises of Addison seem to be very sincere, and to have come from the heart, before any coldness and disgust had taken place betwixt them. Irritated with the success of this Tragedy, Dennis wrote a severe criticism on its plan and fable; and, as Dr. Johnson says, "found and shewed many faults: he found them with anger, but he found them with acuteness, such

as he is of Britain in ours; and though all the foolish industry possible has been used to make it thought a party-play, yet what the author once said of another may the most properly in the world be applied to him, on this occasion;

> Envy itself is dumb, in wonder lost,
> And Factions strive, who shall applaud him most.

The numerous and violent claps of the Whig-party on the one side of the theatre, were echoed back by the Tories on the other; while the author sweated behind the scenes with concern to find their applause proceeding more from the hand than the head. This was the case too of the prologue writer[3], who was clapped into a stanch Whig, at almost every two lines. I believe you have heard, that after all the applauses of the opposite faction, my Lord Bolingbroke sent

as ought to rescue his criticism from oblivion." He accordingly thought it worth republishing in his Life of Addison. "Pope," says Johnson, "had now an opportunity of courting the friendship of Addison, by villifying his old enemy, and could give resentment its full play, without appearing to revenge himself." He therefore published a "Narrative of the Madness of John Dennis;" a performance which left the objections to the play in their full force, and therefore discovered more desire of vexing the critic than of defending the poet. Addison, who was no stranger to the world, probably saw the selfishness of Pope's friendship; and resolving that he should have the consequences of his officiousness to himself, informed Dennis, by Steele, that "he was sorry for the insult, and that whenever he should think fit to answer his remarks, he would do it in a manner to which nothing could be objected."

The Life of Dennis is given in the fifth volume of the Biographia Britannica, by Dr. Kippis, with much candour and impartiality.

[3] Himself.

for Booth, who played Cato, into the Box, between one of the acts, and presented him with fifty guineas; in acknowledgment (as he expressed it) for defending the cause of liberty so well against a Perpetual Dictator[4]. The Whigs are unwilling to be distanced this way, and therefore design a present to the same Cato very speedily; in the mean time they are getting ready as good a sentence as the former on their side: so betwixt them, 'tis probable that Cato (as Dr. Garth expressed it) may have something to live upon, after he dies. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

FROM SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

Easthamstead, Feb. 22, 1714-15.

I AM sensibly obliged, dear Sir, by your kind present of the *Temple of Fame*, into which you are already entered, and I dare prophecy for once (though I am not much given to it) that you will continue there, with those,

> Who ever new, not subject to decays,
> Spread and grow brighter with the length of days.

There was nothing wanting to complete your obliging remembrance of me, but your accompanying it with

[4] Bolingbroke evidently glanced at the power of the Duke of Marlborough. Quin exactly imitated, but did not equal Booth in playing this character.

your poem; your long absence being much the severest part of the winter. I am truly sorry that your time, which you can employ so much better, should be spent in the drudgery of correcting the printers; for as to what you have done yourself, there will nothing of that nature be necessary. I wish you could find a few minutes leisure to let me hear from you sometimes, and to acquaint me how your Homer draws on towards a publication, and all things relating thereunto.

I intreat you to return my humble service to Mr. Jervas. I still flatter myself that he will take an opportunity, in a proper season, to see us, and review his picture, and then to alter some things so as to please himself; which I know will not be, till every thing in it is perfect; no more than I can be, till you believe me to be with that sincerity and esteem, that I am, and will ever continue, your most faithful friend.

LETTER VII.

December 16, 1715.

It was one of the Enigmas of Pythagoras, "When the Winds rise, worship the Echo." A modern writer explains this to signify, "When popular tumults begin, retire to solitudes, or such places where Echos are commonly found, rocks, woods, etc." I am rather of opinion it should be interpreted, "When rumours increase, and when there is abundance of

noise and clamour, believe the second report:" this I think agrees more exactly with the echo, and is the more natural application of the symbol. However it be, either of these precepts is extremely proper to be followed at this season; and I cannot but applaud your resolution of continuing in what you call your cave in the forest, this winter; and preferring the noise of breaking ice to that of breaking statesmen, the rage of storms to that of parties, the fury and ravage of floods and tempests, to the precipitancy of some, and the ruin of others, which, I fear, will be our daily prospects in London.

I sincerely wish myself with you, to contemplate the wonders of God in the firmament, rather than the madness of man on the earth. But I never had so much cause as now to complain of my poetical star, that fixes me, at this tumultuous time, to attend the gingling of rhymes and the measuring of syllables: to be almost the only trifler in the nation; and as ridiculous as the poet in Petronius, who, while all the rest in the ship were either labouring or praying for life, was scratching his head in a little room, to write a fine description of the tempest.

You tell me, you like the sound of no arms but those of Achilles: for my part I like them as little as any other arms. I listed myself in the battles of Homer, and I am no sooner in war, but, like most other folks, I wish myself out again.

I heartily join with you in wishing Quiet to our native country: Quiet in the state, which, like Charity in religion, is too much the perfection and happiness of either, to be broken or violated, on any

pretence or prospect whatsoever. Fire and sword, and fire and faggot, are equally my aversion[5]. I can pray for opposite parties, and for opposite religions, with great sincerity. I think to be a lover of one's country is a glorious elogy, but I do not think it so great an one as to be a lover of mankind.

I sometimes celebrate you under these denominations, and join your health with that of the whole world; a truly catholic health, which far excels the poor narrow-spirited, ridiculous healths now in fashion, to this church, or that church. Whatever our teachers may say, they must give us leave at least to wish generously. These, dear Sir, are my general dispositions; but whenever I pray or wish for particulars, you are one of the first in the thoughts and affections of

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

FROM SIR WILLIAM TRUMBULL.

January 19, 1715-16.

I SHOULD be ashamed of my long idleness, in not acknowledging your kind advice about Echo, and your most ingenious explanation of it relating to popular tumults, which I own to be very useful; and yet give me leave to tell you, that I keep myself to a

[5] A sentiment that does him as much honour as the finest of his verses.

shorter receipt of the same Pythagoras, which is Silence; and this I shall observe, if not the whole time of his discipline, yet at least till your return into this country. I am obliged further to this method, by the most severe weather I ever felt; when, though I keep as near by the fire-side as may be, yet *gelidus concrevit frigore sanguis;* and often I apprehend the circulation of the blood begins to be stopped. I have further great losses (to a poor farmer) of my poor oxen—*Intereunt pecudes, stant circumfusa pruinis Corpora magna boum*, etc.

Pray comfort me if you can, by telling me that your second volume of Homer is not frozen; for it must be expressed very poetically, to say now, that the presses sweat.

I cannot forbear to add a piece of artifice I have been guilty of on occasion of my being obliged to congratulate the birth-day of a friend of mine; when finding I had no materials of my own, I very frankly sent him your imitation of Martial's epigram on *Antonius Primus*[6]. This has been applauded so much, that I am in danger of commencing Poet, perhaps

[6] *Jam numerat placido felix Antonius ævo, etc.*

At length my Friend (while time with still career
Wafts on his gentle wing his eightieth year)
Sees his past days safe out of Fortune's pow'r,
Nor dreads approaching Fate's uncertain hour;
Reviews his life, and in the strict survey
Finds not one moment he could wish away,
Pleas'd with the series of each happy day.
Such, such a man extends his life's short space,
And from the goal again renews the race:
For he lives twice, who can at once employ
The present well, and ev'n the past enjoy. P.

laureat, (pray desire my good friend Mr. Rowe to enter a caveat), provided you will further increase my stock in this bank. In which proceeding I have laid the foundation of my estate, and as honestly, as many others have begun theirs. But now being a little fearful, as young beginners often are, I offer to you (for I have concealed the true author) whether you will give me orders to declare who is the father of this fine child or not? Whatever you determine, my fingers, pen, and ink, are so frozen, that I cannot thank you more at large. You will forgive this and all other faults of, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

SEVERAL PERSONS.

From 1711 to 1714.

LETTER I.

TO THE HON. J. C. ESQ.

June 15, 1711.

I SEND you Dennis's remarks on the Essay[7]; which equally abound in just criticisms and fine railleries. The few observations in my hand in the margins, are what a morning's leisure permitted me to make purely for your perusal. For I am of opinion that such a critic, as you will find him by the latter part of his Book, is but one way to be properly answered, and that way I would not take after what he informs me in his preface, that he is at this time persecuted by fortune. This I knew not before; if I had, his name had been spared in the Essay, for that only reason. I can't conceive what ground he has for so

[7] On Criticism. W.

excessive a resentment; nor imagine how these[8] three lines can be called a reflection on his person, which only describe him subject a little to anger on some occasions. I have heard of combatants so very furious, as to fall down themselves with that very blow which they designed to lay heavy on their antagonist. But if Mr. Dennis's rage proceeds only from a zeal to discourage young and unexperienced writers from scribbling, he should frighten us with his verse, not prose: for I have often known, that, when all the precepts in the world would not reclaim a sinner, some very sad example has done the business. Yet to give this man his due, he has objected to one or two lines with reason, and I will alter them in case of another edition; I will make my enemy do me a kindness where he meant an injury, and so serve instead of a friend. What he observes at the bottom of page 20 of his reflections, was objected to by yourself, and had been mended but for the haste of the press: I confess it what the English call a Bull, in the expression, though the sense be manifest enough: Mr. Dennis's Bulls are seldom in the expression, they are generally in the sense.

I shall certainly never make the least reply to him; not only because you advise me, but because I have ever been of opinion, that, if a book can't answer for itself to the public, 'tis to no sort of purpose for its author to do it[9]. If I am wrong in any sentiment of

[8] But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
And stares tremendous with a threat'ning eye,
Like some fierce tyrant in old tapestry. W.

[9] In works of Poetry and Amusement, and generally in what-

that Essay, I protest sincerely, I don't desire all the world should be deceived (which would be of very ill consequence) merely that I myself may be thought right (which is of very little consequence). I would be the first to recant, for the benefit of others, and the glory of myself; for (as I take it), when a man owns himself to have been in an error, he does but tell you in other words, that he is wiser than he was. But I have had an advantage by the publishing that book, which otherwise I never should have known; it has been the occasion of making me friends and open abettors, of several gentlemen of known sense and wit; and of proving to me what I have till now doubted, that my writings are taken some notice of by the world, or I should never be attacked thus in particular. I have read that 'twas a custom among the *Romans*, while a General rode in triumph to have the common soldiers in the streets that railed at him and reproached him; to put him in mind, that though his services were in the main approved and rewarded, yet he had faults enough to keep him humble.

You will see by this, that whoever sets up for wit in these days ought to have the constancy of a primitive Christian, and be prepared to suffer martyrdom in the cause of it. But sure this is the first time that a Wit was attacked for his *Religion*, as, you'll find, I am most zealously in this treatise; and,

ever concerns the *Composition* of a book, this rule is a very good one. In controverted *Opinions* the case is different. The advancement of truth, or the defence of an Author's honest fame, may sometimes make it necessary, or expedient for him, to answer the objections made to his book. W.

you know, Sir, what alarms I have had from the opposite[1] side on this account. Have I not reason to cry out with the poor fellow in *Virgil*,

> Quid jam misero mihi denique restat?
> Cui neque apud *Danaos* usquam locus, et super ipsi
> *Dardanidæ* infensi pœnas cum sanguine poscunt!

'Tis however my happiness that you, Sir, are impartial,

> *Jove* was alike to *Latian* and to *Phrygian*,
> For you well know, that Wit's of no Religion.

The manner in which Mr. D. takes to pieces several particular lines, detached from their natural places may shew how easy it is to a caviller to give a new sense, or a new nonsense, to any thing. And indeed his constructions are not more wrested from the genuine meaning, than theirs who objected to the heterodox parts, as they call them.

Our friend the Abbe is not of that sort, who with the utmost candour and freedom has modestly told me what others thought, and shewn himself one, (as he very well expresses it), rather of a number than a party. The only difference between us in relation to the Monks, is, that he thinks most sorts of learning flourished among them, and I am of opinion, that only some sort of learning was barely kept alive by them: he believes that in the most natural and obvious sense, that line, (A second deluge learning over-run), will be understood of learning in general; and I fancy 'twill be understood only, (as 'tis meant), of polite learning, criticism, poetry, &c. which is the

[1] See the ensuing Letter. W.

only learning concerned in the subject of the Essay. It is true, that the monks did preserve what learning there was, about Nicholas the fifth's time[2]; but those who succeeded fell into the depth of barbarism, or at least stood at a stay while others arose from thence, insomuch that even Erasmus and Reuchlin could could hardly laugh them out of it. I am highly obliged to the Abbe's zeal in my commendation, and goodness in not concealing what he thinks my error. And his testifying some esteem for the book just at a time when his brethren raised a clamour against it, is an instance of great generosity and candour, which I shall ever acknowledge.

Your, etc.

LETTER II.

TO THE SAME.

June 18, 1711.

In your last you informed me of the mistaken zeal of some people, who seem to make it no less their

[2] Notwithstanding the praises lavished on *Leo* the *Tenth*, yet was the restoration of polite literature, in the West, chiefly owing to Pope *Nicholas* the *Fifth;* who has not met with encomiums equal to his merits. It was he who first ransacked all the Byzantine Libraries, and the Monasteries of Germany and Britain, for Greek Manuscripts. Hence, in the space of eight years, he filled a library with more than five thousand volumes. To him were we indebted for the first translations of Xenophon, Polybius, Thucydides, Herodotus, and Homer; and also of the best parts of Plato and Aristotle. See *Tiraboschi*, tom. vi. p. 109; and in Hody's entertaining account *De Græcis Illustribus*, read pages 55 and 105.

business to persuade men they are erroneous, than doctors do that they are sick; only that they may magnify their own cure, and triumph over an imaginary distemper. The simile objected to in my Essay,

> (Thus wit, like faith, by each man is apply'd
> To one small sect, and all are damn'd beside),

plainly concludes at this second line, where stands a full stop: and what follows, *(Meanly they seek*, etc.) speaks only of wit, (which is meant by that blessing, and that sun,) for how can the sun of faith be said to sublime the southern wits, and to ripen the genius's of northern climates? I fear, these gentlemen understand grammar as little as they do criticism; and, perhaps out of good-nature to the monks, are willing to take from them the censure of ignorance, and to have it to themselves. The word *they* refers (as I am sure, I meant, and as I thought every one must have known) to those Critics there spoken of, who are partial to some particular set of writers, to the prejudice of all others. And the very simile itself, it twice read, may convince them, that the censure here of damning, lies not on our church at all, unless they call our church *one small sect:* and the cautious words *(by each man)* manifestly show it a general reflection on all such (whoever they are) who entertain those narrow and limited notions of the mercy of the Almighty which the reformed ministers and Presbyterians are as guilty of as any people living.

Yet after all, I promise you, Sir, if the alteration of a word or two will gratify any man of sound faith, though weak understanding, I will (though it were

from no other principle than that of common good-nature) comply with it. And if you please but to particularize the spot where their objection lies, (for it is in a very narrow compass,) that stumbling-block, though it be but a little pebble, shall be removed out of their way. If the heat of these good disputants (who, I am afraid, being bred up to wrangle in the schools, cannot get rid of the humour all their lives) should proceed so far as to personal reflections upon me, I assure you, notwithstanding, I will do or say nothing, however provoked, (for some people can no more provoke than oblige,) that it is unbecoming the true character of a Catholic. I will set before me the example of that great man, and great saint, Erasmus;[3] who in the midst of calumny proceeded

[3] The author of the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, who has unhappily blemished his History by many irreligious Sarcasms, after having liberally praised Erasmus as one of the chief instruments of the Reformation, adds, "that, at the Reformation, the loss of the mystery of *transubstantiation* was amply compensated by the stupendous doctrines of *original sin*, *redemption*, *faith*, *grace*, and *predestination*: which have been *strained* from the Epistles of St. Paul."—It is mortifying to hear such a man as Bossuet declare in his famous *History of the Variations*, that Erasmus was an *Infidel*.

Jortin speaks on this subject with his usual candour and ingenuity. See also Essay on Criticism.

"Le Clerc often censures Erasmus for his lukewarmness, timidity, and unfairness, in the matter of the Reformation; and I, as a translator, have adopted these censures, only softening them a little here and there: for I am, in the main, of the same opinion with Le Clerc as to this point. As Protestants, we are certainly much obliged to Erasmus; yet we are more obliged to the authors of the Reformation, to Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Œcolampadius, Cranmer, Bucer, &c. But here I would observe, once for all, that many arguments may be plausibly urged on the other side, either to excuse, or at least to ex-

with all the calmness of innocence[4], and the unrevenging spirit of primitive Christianity. However,

tenuate very much that conduct of Erasmus which offended the Protestant party. Erasmus, as you may see in this account of his life, was not entirely free from prejudices of education, and had some indistinct and confused notions about the authority of the Church Catholic. He talks much of submitting his own opinions and his own judgment to her by an act of implicit faith and unlimited obedience. He thought it not lawful to depart from the Church of Rome, corrupted as she was. He was afterward shocked also at the violent quarrels, which arose about the Lord's Supper amongst the Reformers, the Zuinglians, and the Lutherans; for in those days, Zuinglius and his adherents were the only men who talked reasonably upon that subject. He was no less shocked at the pestilent tumults and rebellions of the Rustics, the Fanatics, and Anabaptists. I cannot believe, that the fear of losing his pensions and of coming to want, made him say and do things which he thought to be unlawful: but it may be fairly supposed, that he was afraid of disobliging several of his oldest and best friends, who were against the Lutheran reformation; of offending, not only Henry VIII. and Charles V. and the Popes, and George of Saxony, and Wolsey, &c. but even his Patrons Warham, Montjoy, More, Tonstal, Fisher, Campegius, Bembus, Sadolet, and many others whom he loved entirely, and to some of whom he was much obliged. These things might influence his judgment, though he himself was not at all aware of it. There is no necessity to suppose that he acted against his conscience in adhering to the Church of Rome. No: he persuaded himself that he did as much as piety and prudence required from him, in freely censuring her defects."

[4] I doubt this is not strictly true. See his answers to Lee, archbishop of York. Though it must be owned this miserable prelate had provoked the incomparable man, by the most infamous scurrilities and abuse. W.

Dr. Warburton, methinks, could not, with propriety, object to Erasmus, that he had answered an opponent with warmth, and even vehemence of spirit. The liberal sentiments of Erasmus, are in no parts of his works more striking, than in the Dedication prefixed to St. Hilary, and his fine Preface to the Enchiridion Militis Christiani.

I would advise them to suffer the mention of him to pass unregarded, lest I should be forced to do that for his reputation which I would never do for my own; I mean to vindicate so great a light of our church from the malice of past times, and the ignorance of the present, in a language which may extend farther than that which the trifle about criticism is written. I wish these gentlemen would be contented with finding fault with me only, who will submit to them right or wrong, as far as I only am concerned; I have a greater regard to the quiet of mankind than to disturb it for things of so little consequence as my credit and my sense. A little humility can do a poet no hurt, and a little charity would do a priest none: for, as St. Austin finely says, *Ubi caritas*[5], *ibi humilitas; ubi humilitas, ibi pax.*

Your, etc.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

July 19, 1711.

THE concern which you more than seem to be affected with for my reputation, by the several accounts you have so obligingly given of what reports and censures the holy Vandals have thought fit to pass upon me, makes me desirous of telling so good

[5] It were to be wished that all the sentiments of St. Austin had been equally candid and judicious.

a friend the thoughts of this matter; and of setting before you, in a clear light, the true state of it.

I have ever believed the best piece of service one could do to our religion, was openly to express our detestation and scorn of all those mean artifices and *piæ fraudes*[6], which it stands so little in need of, and which have laid it under so great a scandal among its enemies.

Nothing has been so much a scarecrow[7] to them, as that too peremptory and uncharitable assertion of an utter impossibility of salvation to all but ourselves; invincible ignorance excepted, which indeed some people define under so great limitations, and with such exclusions, that it seems as if that word were rather invented as a salvo, or expedient, not to be thought to be too bold with the thunder-bolts of God, (which are hurled about so freely on almost all

[6] In a letter written January 8, 1782, to the President Henault, Voltaire thus attempts to defend the freedom of his opinions; "Je ne crois pas qu'il me soit echappé un seul trait contre la Religion: les fureurs du Calvanisme, les querelles du Jansenisme, les illusions mystiques de Quietisme, ne sont pas la religion. J'ai cru que c'était rendre service à l'esprit humain de rendre le fanatisme exécrable, et les disputes théologiques ridicules." If he had confined his wit to these topics, he would not have fallen under the just and severe censure that has been passed on many of his works; in which he forgot his own striking maxim:

"Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer."

[7] This is a sentiment full of liberality and universal benevolence; and directly opposite to a *fundamental, unchristian, narrow* tenet of the Church of Rome. A zealot, we see, had suspected our Author's orthodoxy; he repels this attack with energy, ability, and truth. The whole letter does honour to the liberality, honesty, and candour, of his sentiments; and deserves the most attentive perusal.

mankind by the hands of ecclasiastics,) than as a real exception to almost universal damnation. For besides the small number of the truly faithful in our Church, we must again subdivide; the Jansenist is damned by the Jesuit, the Jesuit by the Jansenist, the Scotist by the Thomist, and so forth.

There may be errors, I grant, but I can't think them of such consequence as to destroy utterly the charity of mankind; the very greatest bond in which we are engaged by God to one another: therefore, I own to you, I was glad of any opportunity to express my dislike of so shocking a sentiment as those of the religion I profess are commonly charged with; and I hoped a slight insinuation, introduced so easily by a casual similitude only, could never have given offence; but on the contrary must needs have done good; in a nation and time, wherein we are the smaller party, and consequently most misrepresented, and most in need of vindication.

For the same reason, I took occasion to mention the superstition of some ages after the subversion of the Roman empire, which is too manifest a truth to be denied, and does in no sort reflect upon the present professors of our faith, who are free from it. Our silence in these points may, with some reason, make our adversaries think we allow and persist in those bigotries; which yet in reality all good and sensible men despise, thought hey are persuaded not to speak against them, I can't tell why, since now 'tis no way the interest even of the worst of our priesthood (as it might have been then) to have them smothered in silence: for, as the opposite sects are

now prevailing, 'tis too late to hinder our church from being slandered; 'tis our business now to vindicate ourselves from being thought abettors of what they charge us with. This can't so well be brought about with serious faces; we must laugh with them at what deserves it, or be content to be laughed at, with such as deserve it.

As to particulars: you cannot but have observed, that at first the whole objection against the simile of Wit and Faith lay to the word They: when that was beyond contradiction removed (the very grammar serving to confute them) then the objection was against the simile itself; or if that simile will not be objected to, (sense and common reason being indeed a little stubborn, and not apt to give way to every body,) next the mention of Superstition must become a crime; as if Religion and she were sisters, or that it were a Scandal upon the family of Christ, to say a word against the devil's bastard. Afterwards, more mischief is discovered in a place that seemed innocent at first, the two lines about *Schismatics*. An ordinary man would imagine the author plainly declared against those Schismatics, for quitting the true faith out of a contempt of the understanding of some few of its believers: but these believers are called *dull*, and because I say that those schismatics think some believers dull, therefore these charitable interpreters of my meaning will have it, that I think all believers dull. I was lately telling Mr. * * these objections: who assured me I had said nothing which a Catholic need to disown; and I have cause to know that gentleman's fault (if he has any) is not want of zeal: he

put a notion into my head, which, I confess, I can't but acquiesce in; that when a set of people are piqued at any truth which they think to their own disadvantage, their method of revenge on the truth-speaker is to attack his reputation a by-way, and not openly to object to the place they are really galled by: what these therefore (in his opinion) are in earnest angry at, is, that Erasmus, whom their tribe oppressed and persecuted, should be vindicated after an age of obloquy by one of their own people, willing to utter an honest truth in behalf of the dead; whom no man sure will flatter, and to whom few will do justice. Others, you know, were as angry that I mentioned Mr. Walsh with honour; who as he never refused to any one of merit of any party the praise due to him, so honestly deserved it from all others, though of ever so different interests or sentiments. May I be ever guilty of this sort of liberty, and latitude of principle; which gives us the hardiness of speaking well of those whom envy oppresses even after death. As I would always speak well of my living friends when they are absent, nay because they are absent, so would I much more of the dead, in that eternal absence; and the rather because I expect no thanks for it.

Thus, Sir, you see I do in my conscience persist in what I have written; yet in my friendship I will recant and alter whatever you please, in case of a second edition (which I think the book will not so soon arrive at, for Tonson's printer told me he drew off a thousand copies in his first impression, and, I

fancy, a treatise of this nature, which not one gentleman[8] in threescore even of a liberal education can understand, can hardly exceed the vent of that number). You shall find me a true Trojan in my faith and friendship, in both which I will persevere to the end.

Your, etc.

LETTER IV.

TO MY LORD LANSDOWN.

Binfield, January 10, 1712.

I THANK you for having given my poem of Windsor Forest its greatest ornament, that of bearing your name in the front of it. 'Tis one thing when a person of true merit permits us to have the honour of drawing him as like as we can; and another, when we make a fine thing at random, and persuade the next vain creature we find that 'tis his own likeness; which is the case every day of my fellow scribblers. Yet, my Lord, this honour has given me no more pride than your honours have given you; but it affords me a great deal of pleasure, which is much better than a great deal of pride; and it indeed would give me some pain, if I was not sure of one advantage; that whereas others are offended if they have not more than justice done them, you would be

[8] The gentlemen, and the education of that time, as Dr. Johnson justly observes, seem to have been (and certainly were) of a lower character than they are of this.

displeased if you had so much; therefore I may safely do you as much injury in my word, as you do yourself in your own thoughts. I am so vain as to think I have shewn you a favour, in sparing your modesty, and you cannot but make me some return for prejudicing the truth to gratify you. This I beg may be the free correction of these verses, which will have few beauties, but what may be made by your blots. I am in the circumstance of an ordinary painter drawing Sir Godfrey Kneller, who by a few touches of his own could make the piece very valuable. I might then hope, that many years hence the world might read, in conjunction with your name, that of

Your Lordship's, etc.

LETTER V.

FROM THE HON. J. C.

May 23, 1712.

I AM very glad, for the sake of the widow, and for the credit of the deceased, that Betterton's[9] remains are fallen into such hands as may render them reputable to the one, and beneficial to the other. Besides the public acquaintance I long had with that poor man, I also had a slender knowledge of his parts and capacity by private conversation, and ever thought it pity he was necessitated by the straitness of

[9] A Translation of some part of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, the Prologues, etc. printed in a Miscellany with some works of Mr. Pope, in 2 Vols. 12°, B. Lintot. P.

his fortune, to act (and especially to his latest hours) an imaginary and fictitious part, who was capable of exhibiting a real one, with credit to himself, and advantage to his neighbour.

I hope your health permitted you to execute your design of giving us an imitation of Pollio; I am satisfied it will be doubly divine, and I shall long to see it. I ever thought church-music the most ravishing of all harmonious compositions, and must also believe sacred subjects, well handled, the most inspiring of all poetry.

But where hangs the *Lock* now? (though I know that rather than draw any just reflection upon yourself of the least shadow of ill-nature, you would freely have suppressed one of the best of poems.) I hear no more of it —will it come out in Lintot's Miscellany or not? I wrote to Lord Petre upon the subject of the Lock, some time since, but have as yet had no answer, nor indeed do I know when he'll be in London. I have, since I saw you, corresponded with Mrs. W. I hope she is now with her aunt, and that her journey thither was something facilitated by my writing to that lady as pressingly as possible, not to let any thing whatever obstruct it. I sent her obliging answer to the party it most concerned; and when I hear Mrs. W. is certainly there, I will write again to my Lady, to urge as much as possible the effecting the only thing that in my opinion can make her niece easy. I have run out my extent of paper, and am

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

THE ANSWER.

May 28, 1712.

It is not only the disposition I always have of conversing with you, that makes me so speedily answer your obliging letter, but the apprehension lest your charitable intent of writing to my Lady A. on Mrs. W—'s affair should be frustrated, by the short stay she makes there. She went thither on the 25th with that mixture of expectation and anxiety, with which people usually go into unknown or half-discovered countries, utterly ignorant of the disposition of the inhabitants, and the treatment they are to meet with. The unfortunate of all people are the most unfit to be left alone; yet, we see, the world generally takes care they shall be so; whereas, if we took a considerate prospect of the world, the business and study of the happy and easy should be to divert and humour, as well as comfort and pity, the distressed. I cannot therefore excuse some near Allies of mine for their conduct of late towards this lady, which has given me a great deal of anger as well as sorrow: all I shall say to you of them at present is, that they have not been my Relations these two months. The consent of opinions in our minds, is certainly a nearer tie than can be contracted by all the blood in our bodies; and am proud of finding I have something congenial with you. Will you permit me to confess to you, that all the favours and kind offices you have

shewn towards me, have not so strongly cemented me yours, as the discovery of that generous and manly compassion you manifested in the case of this unhappy lady? I am afraid to insinuate to you how much I esteem you: Flatterers have taken up the style which was once peculiar to friends, and an honest man has now no way left to express himself besides the common one of knaves: so that true friends now-a-days differ in their address from flatterers, much as right mastiffs do from spaniels, and shew themselves by a dumb surly sort of fidelity, rather than by a complaisant and open kindness.——Will you never leave commending my poetry? In fair truth, Sir, I like it but too well myself already: expose me no more, I beg you, to the great danger of Vanity, (the rock of all men, but most of young men,) and be kindly content for the future, when you would please me thoroughly, to say only you like what I write.

Your, etc.

LETTER VII.

December 5, 1712.

You have at length complied with the request I have often made you, for you have shewn me, I must confess, several of my faults in the sight of those letters. Upon a review of them, I find many things that would give me shame, if I were not more desirous to be thought honest than prudent; so many

things freely thrown out, such lengths of unreserved friendship, thoughts just warm from the brain, without any polishing or dress, the very dishabille of the understanding. You have proved yourself more tender of another's embryos than the fondest mothers are of their own, for you have preserved every thing that I miscarried of. Since I know this, I shall in one respect be more afraid of writing to you than ever, at this careless rate, because I see my evil works may again rise in judgment against me; yet in another respect I shall be less afraid, since this has given me such a proof of the extreme indulgence you afford to my slightest thoughts. The revisal of these letters has been a kind of examination of conscience to me; so fairly and faithfully have I set down in them from time to time the true and undisguised state of my mind. But, I find, that these, which were intended as sketches of my friendship, give as imperfect images of it, as the little landscapes we commonly see in black and white do of a beautiful country; they can represent but a very small part of it, and that deprived of the life and lustre of nature. I perceived that the more I endeavoured to render manifest the real affection and value I ever had for you, I did but injure it by representing less and less of it: as glasses which are designed to make an object very clear, generally contract it. Yet, as when people have a full idea of a thing first upon their own knowledge, the least traces of it serve to refresh the remembrance, and are not displeasing on that score; so I hope, the foreknowledge you had of my esteem

for you, is the reason that you do not dislike my letters.

They will not be of any great service, (I find,) in the design I mentioned to you: I believe I had better steal from a richer man, and plunder your letters (which I have kept as carefully as I would Letters Patents, since they intitle me to what I more value than titles of honour). You have some cause to apprehend this usage from me, if what some say be true, that I am a great borrower; however I have hitherto had the luck that none of my creditors have challenged me for it: and those who say it are such whose writings no man ever borrowed from, so have the least reason to complain; and whose works are granted on all hands to be too much their own. Another has been pleased to declare, that my verses are corrected by other men: I verily believe theirs were never corrected by any man; but indeed if mine have not, 'twas not my fault: I have endeavoured my utmost that they should. But these things are only whispered, and I will not encroach upon Bays's province and *pen-whispers*, so hasten to conclude,

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

FROM MY LORD LANSDOWN.

October 21, 1713.

I AM pleased beyond measure with your design of translating Homer. The trials which you have already made and published on some parts of that author, have shewn that you are equal to so great a task: and you may therefore depend upon the utmost services I can do you in promoting this work, or any thing that may be for your service.

I hope Mr. Stafford, for whom you was pleased to concern yourself, has had the good effects of the Queen's Grace to him. I had notice the night before I began my journey, that her Majesty had not only directed his pardon, but ordered a Writ for reversing his Outlawry.

Your, etc.

LETTER IX.

TO GENERAL ANTHONY HAMILTON[1],

Upon his having translated into French Verse the ESSAY ON CRITICISM.

October 10, 1713.

IF I could as well express, or (if you will allow me to say it) translate the sentiments of my heart as

[1] Author of the Memoirs of the *Count de Gramont*, *Contas*, and other pieces of note in French. P.

They have been lately printed most beautifully at Strawberry

you have done those of my head, in your excellent version of my Essay; I should not only appear the best writer in the world, but, what I much more desire to be thought, the most your servant of any man living. 'Tis an advantage very rarely known, to receive at once, a great honour and a great improvement. This, Sir, you have afforded me, having, at the same time, made others take my sense, and taught me to understand my own; if I may call that my own which is indeed more properly yours. Your verses are no more a translation of mine, than Virgil's are of Homer's; but are, like his, the justest imitation and the noblest Commentary.

In putting me into a French dress, you have not only adorned my outside, but mended my shape; and if I am now a good figure, I must consider you have naturalized me into a country which is famous for making every man a fine gentleman. It is by your means, that (contrary to most young travellers) I am come back much better than I went out.

I cannot but wish we had a bill of commerce for

Hill, in quarto, with cuts of each remarkable person mentioned in them, under the auspices, and by the direction of, a nobleman, whose taste and literature are equalled only by the elegance of his manners and the goodness of his heart. The Memoirs of Gramont, if no other proofs were extant, would be indisputable and irrefragable testimonies of the extreme profligacy and dissoluteness of manners in the Court of Charles the Second; manners learnt and imitated from the Court of Louis the Fourteenth; whence also he adopted and brought hither those principles of arbitrary power that England would not bear, and of which we have lived to see the very lamentable effects in France itself. For it must, after all, be confessed, that, in that unhappy country, it was DESPOTISM which has ultimately produced ANARCHY, and POPERY which has produced ATHEISM.

translation established the next parliament: we could not fail of being gainers by that, nor of making ourselves amends for any thing we have lost by the war. Nay, though we should insist upon the demolishing of Boileau's works, the French, as long as they have writers of your form, might have as good an equivalent.

Upon the whole, I am really as proud, as our ministers ought to be, of the terms I have gained from abroad; and I design, like them, to publish speedily to the world the benefits accruing from them; for I cannot resist the temptation of printing your admirable translation here[2]; to which if you will be so obliging to give me leave to prefix your name, it will be the only addition you can make to the honour already done me. I am

Your, etc.

[2] This was never done, for the two printed French versions are neither of this hand. The one was done by Monsieur Roboton, private secretary to King George the First, printed in quarto at Amsterdam, and at London, 1717. The other by the Abbe Resnel, in octavo, with a large preface and notes, at Paris, 1730. P.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

MR. STEELE, MR. ADDISON, MR. CONGREVE, &c.

From the Year 1712 to 1715.

LETTER I.

FROM MR. STEELE.

June 1, 1712.

I AM at a solitude, an house between Hampstead and London, wherein Sir Charles Sedley died. This circumstance set me a thinking and ruminating upon the employments in which men of wit[a] exercise themselves. It was said of Sir Charles, who breathed his last in this room,

> *Sedley* has that prevailing gentle art,
> Which can with a resistless charm impart
> The loosest wishes to the chastest heart;
> Raise such a conflict, kindle such a fire
> Between declining Virtue and Desire,
> Till the poor vanquish d Maiddissolves away,
> In dreams all night, in sighs and tears all day.

[a] Pope said of Steele, that though he led a careless and vicious life, yet he had, nevertheless, a love and reverence of virtue. It is said George I. sent five hundred guineas to Steele for the dedication of the Conscious Lovers. Dennis wrote against this comedy, and called Steele a two-penny author, alluding to the price of his Tatler.

This was a happy talent to a man of the town, but I dare say, without presuming to make uncharitable conjectures on the author's present condition, he would rather have had it said of him that he had prayed,

> Oh thou my voice inspire,
> Who touch'd Isaiah's hallow'd lips with fire!

I have turned to every verse and chapter, and think you have preserved the sublime heavenly spirit throughout the whole, especially at——*Hark, a glad voice*—and—*The lamb with wolves shall graze*—— There is but one line[4] which I think is below the original;

> He wipes the tears for ever from our eyes.

You have expressed it with a good and pious, but not so exalted and poetical a spirit as the prophet, *The Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.* If you agree with me in this, alter it by way of paraphrase or otherwise, that when it comes into a volume it may be amended. Your poem is already better than the Pollio. I am

Your, etc.

[4] In consequence of this objection this line was altered thus;

> From every eye he wipes off every tear.

I own I cannot forbear thinking that this repetition of the word *every* is a quaint and pretty modernism, unsuited to the subject.

LETTER II.

THE ANSWER.

June 18, 1712.

You have obliged me with a very kind letter, by which I find you shift the scenes of your life from the town to the country, and enjoy that mixed state which wise men both delight in, and are qualified for. Methinks the moralists and philosophers have generally run too much into extremes in commending entirely either solitude, or public life. In the former, men for the most part grow useless by too much rest, and in the latter are destroyed by too much precipitation; as waters lying still, putrify, and are good for nothing, and running violently on do but the more mischief in their passage to others, and are swallowed up and lost the sooner themselves. Those indeed who can be useful to all states, should be like gentle streams, that not only glide through lonely valleys and forests amidst the flocks and the shepherds, but visit populous towns in their course, and are at once of ornament and service to them. But there are another sort of people who seem designed for solitude, such, I mean, as have more to hide than to show. As for my own part, I am one of those of whom Seneca says, *Tam umbratiles sunt, ut putent in turbido esse quicquid in luce est.* Some men, like some

[6] There are too many common-place sentences and reflections in this letter, and an air of solemn declamation, unsuited to a familiar epistle. The same may be said of the succeeding letter.

pictures, are fitter for a corner than a full light; and I believe, such as have a natural bent to solitude (to carry on the former similitude) are like waters, which may be forced into fountains, and exalted into a great height, may make a noble figure and a louder noise, but after all they would run more smoothly, quietly, and plentifully, in their own natural course upon the ground[6]. The consideration of this would make me very well contented with the possession only of that Quiet with Cowley calls the companion of Obscurity. But whoever has the Muses too for his companions, can never be idle enough, to be uneasy. Thus, Sir, you see, I would flatter myself into a good opinion of my own way of living. Plutarch just now told me, that 'tis in human life as in a game at tables, where a man may wish for the highest cast, but, if his chance be otherwise, he is e'en to play it as well as he can, and to make the best of it. I am,

Your, etc.

LETTER III.

TO MR. STEELE.

July 15, 1712.

You formerly observed to me that nothing made a more ridiculous figure in a man's life than the dis-

[6] The foregoing Similitudes our Author had put into verse some years before, and inserted into Mr. Wycherley's poem on *Mixed Life*. We find them in the versification very distinct from the rest of that poem. See his posthumous works, octavo, page 3 and 4. P.

parity we often find in him sick and well; thus one of an unfortunate constitution is perpetually exhibiting a miserable example of the weakness of his mind, and of his body, in their turns. I have had frequent opportunities of late to consider myself in these different views, and, I hope, have received some advantage by it, if what Waller says be true, that

> The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
> Lets in new Light thro' chinks that time has made.

Then surely sickness, contributing no less than old age to the shaking down this scaffolding of the body, may discover the inward structure more plainly. Sickness is a sort of early old age; it teaches us a diffidence in our earthly state, and inspires us with the thoughts of a future, better than a thousand volumes of philosophers and divines. It gives so warning a concussion to those props of our vanity, our strength and youth, that we think of fortifying ourselves within, when there is so little dependance upon our out-works. Youth at the very best is but a betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age: 'tis like a stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret. My youth has dealt more fairly and openly with me, it has afforded several prospects of my danger, and given me an advantage not very common to young men, that the attractions of the World have not dazzled me very much; and I begin, where most people end, with a full conviction of the emptiness of all sorts of ambition, and the unsatisfactory nature of all human pleasures. When

a smart fit of sickness tells me this scurvy tenement of my body will fall in a little time, I am e'en as unconcerned as was that honest Hibernian, who being in bed in the great storm some years ago, and told the house would tumble over his head, made answer What care I for the house? I am only a lodger. I fancy it is the best time to die when one is in the best humour; and so excessively weak as I now am, I may say with conscience, that I am not at all uneasy at the thought, that many men, whom I never had any esteem for, are likely to enjoy this world after me. When I reflect what an inconsiderable little atom every single man is, with respect to the whole creation, methinks, 'tis a shame to be concerned at the removal of such a trivial animal as I am. The morning after my exit, the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green, the world will proceed in its old course, people will laugh as heartily, and marry as fast, as they were used to do. The memory of man (as it is elegantly expressed in the Book of Wisdom) passeth away as the remembrance of a guest that tarrieth but one day. There are reasons enough, in the fourth chapter of the same book, to make any young man contented with the prospect of death. "For honourable age is not that which standeth in length of time, or is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the grey hair to man, and an unspotted life is old age. He was taken away speedily, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul," etc. I am,

Your, etc.

LETTER IV.

TO MR. STEELE.

November 7, 1712.

I WAS the other day in company with five or six men of some learning; where chancing to mention the famous verses which the Emperor Adrian spoke on his death-bed, they were all agreed that it was a piece of gaiety unworthy of that prince in those circumstances. I could not but differ from this opinion: methinks it was by no means a gay, but a very serious soliloquy, to his soul at the point of its departure; in which sense I naturally took the verses at my first reading them, when I was very young, and before I knew what interpretation the world generally put upon them.

Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes comesque corporis,
  Quæ nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec (ut soles) dabis joca!

"Alas, my soul! thou pleasing companion of this body, thou fleeting thing that art now deserting it! whither art thou flying? to what unknown scene? all trembling, fearful, and pensive? what now is become of thy former wit and humour? thou shalt jest and be gay no more."

I confess I cannot apprehend where lies the trifling in all this: it is the most natural and obvious reflection imaginable to a dying man: and if we consider the

Emperor was a heathen, that doubt concerning the future state of his soul will seem so far from being the effect of want of thought, that it was scarce reasonable he should think otherwise; not to mention that here is a plain confession included of his belief in its immortality. The diminutive epithets[7] of *vagula*, *blandula*, and the rest, appear not to me as expressions of levity, but rather of endearment and concern; such as we find in Catullus, and the authors of *Hendeca-syllabi* after him, where they are used to express the utmost love and tenderness for their mistresses—If you think me right in my notion of the last words of Adrian, be pleased to insert it in the Spectator; if not, to suppress it.

I am, etc.

ADRIANI MORIENTIS AD ANIMAM.

TRANSLATED.

Ah fleeting spirit! wand'ring fire,
That long hast warm'd my tender breast,
Must thou no more this frame inspire?
No more a pleasing cheerful guest?
Whither, ah whither art thou flying!
To what dark, undiscover'd shore?
Thou seem'st all trembling, shiv'ring, dying,
And Wit and Humour are no more!

[7] These sort of epithets are carried to a great degree of affectation by the modern Latin Poets of Italy, in their many Imitations of the *Hendeca-Syllabi* of Catullus: even by such charming writers as Naugerius, Cotta, and Flaminius, and many others. Nothing can be more unlike Catullus than these luscious, florid, and meretricious ornaments; whose style is remarkable for purity, simplicity, and a certain austerity that is peculiarly charming. Mr. Wilkes has done honour to the English press, and to his own exquisite taste and judgment in polite literature, in giving us, a

LETTER V.

MR. STEELE TO MR. POPE.

November 12, 1712.

I HAVE read over your Temple of Fame twice, and cannot find any thing amiss, of weight enough to call a fault, but see in it a thousand thousand beauties. Mr. Addison shall see it to-morrow: after his perusal of it, I will let you know his thoughts. I desire you would let me know whether you are at leisure or not? I have a design which I shall open a month or two hence, with the assistance of the few like yourself. If your thoughts are unengaged, I shall explain myself further. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

THE ANSWER.

November 16, 1712.

YOU oblige me by the indulgence you have shewn to the poem I sent you, but will oblige me much more by the kind severity I hope for from you. No

few years ago, the best and most elegant edition of Catullus extant. London, quarto, 1788.

He has since given us an elegant edition of Theophrastus, which, from his wit and humour, and knowledge of life and characters, it were to be wished he had enriched with notes and illustrations. To the taste and erudition of Mr. Wilkes I am indebted for many remarks in this edition of his favourite writer.

errors are so trivial, but they deserve to be mended. But since you say you see nothing that may be called a fault, can you but think it so, that I have confined the attendance of [8] Guardian spirits to Heaven's favourites only? I could point you to several, but it is my business to be informed of those faults I do not know; and as for those I do, not to talk of them, but to correct them. You speak of that poem in a style I neither merit, nor expect; but, I assure you, if you freely mark or dash out, I shall look upon your blots to be its greatest beauties: I mean, if Mr. Addison and yourself should like it in the whole; otherwise the trouble of correction is what I would not take, for I was really so diffident of it as to let it lie by me these[9] two years, just as you now see it. I am afraid of nothing so much as to impose any thing on the world which is unworthy of its acceptance.

As to the last period of your letter, I shall be very ready and glad to contribute to any design that tends to the advantage of mankind, which, I am sure, all yours do. I wish I had but as much capacity as leisure, for I am perfectly idle: (a sign I have not much capacity.)

If you will entertain the best opinion of me, be pleased to think me your friend. Assure Mr. Addison of my most faithful service, of every one's esteem he must be assured already. I am

Your, etc.

[8] This is not now to be found in the *Temple of Fame*, which was the poem here spoken of. P.

[9] Hence it appears this Poem was writ before the Author was twenty-two years old. P.

LETTER VII.

TO MR. STEELE.

November 29, 1712.

I AM sorry you published that notion about Adrian's verses as mine: had I imagined you would use my name, I should have expressed my sentiments with more modesty and diffidence. I only sent it to have your opinion, and not to publish my own, which I distrusted. But, I think the supposition you draw from the notion of Adrian's being addicted to magic, is a little uncharitable, ("that he might fear no sort of deity, good or bad,") since in the third verse he plainly testifies his apprehension of a future state, by being solicitous whither his soul was going. As to what you mention of his using gay and ludicrous expressions, I have owned my opinion to be, that the expressions are not so, but that diminutives are as often, in the Latin tongue, used as marks of tenderness and concern.

Anima is no more than my soul, *animula* has the force of my dear soul. To say *virgo bella* is not half so endearing as *virguncula bellula;* and had Augustus only called Horace *lepidum hominem*, it had amounted to no more than that he thought him a pleasant fellow: it was the *homunciolum* that expressed the love and tenderness that great Emperor had for him. And perhaps I should myself be much better pleased, if I were told you called me your little friend, than if you

complimented me with the title of a great genius, or an eminent hand, as Jacob does all his authors.

I am

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

FROM MR. STEELE.

December 4, 1712.

THIS is to desire of you that you would please to make an Ode as of a chearful dying spirit, that is to say, the Emperor Adrian's *Animula vagula* put into two or three stanzas for music. If you comply with this, and send me word so, you will very particularly oblige Your, etc.

LETTER IX.

I DO not send you word I will do, but have already done the thing you desired of me. You have it (as Cowley calls it) just warm from the brain. It came to me the first moment I waked this morning: Yet, you'll see, it was not so absolutely inspiration, but that I had in my head not only the verses of Adrian, but the fine fragment of Sappho, etc.

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

ODE.

I.

Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, oh quit this mortal frame;
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
Oh the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond Nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

II.

Hark! they whisper; Angels say,
Sister Spirit, come away!
What is this absorbs me quite,
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirits, draws my breath?
Tell me, my soul, can this be Death?

III.

The world recedes; it disappears!
Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring:
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy Victory?
O Death! where is thy Sting?

LETTER X.

TO MR. ADDISON.

July 20, 1713.

I AM more joyed at your return than I should be at that of the sun, so much as I wish for him this melancholy wet season; but it is his fate too, like yours, to be displeasing to Owls and obscene animals,

who cannot bear his lustre. What put me in mind of these night birds was John Dennis, who, I think, you are best revenged upon, as the Sun was in the fable upon these bats and beastly birds above-mentioned, only by *shining on.* I am so far from esteeming it any misfortune, that I congratulate you upon having your share in that, which all the great men and all the good men that ever lived have had their part of, Envy and Calumny. To be uncensured and to be obscure, is the same thing. You may conclude from what I here say, that it was never in my thoughts to have offered you my pen in any direct reply to such a Critic, but only in some little raillery; not in defence of you, but in contempt of him[1]. But indeed your opinion, that it is entirely to be neglected, would have been my own had it been my own case; but I felt more warmth here than I did when first I saw his book against myself (though indeed in two minutes it made me heartily merry). He has written against every thing the world has approved these many years. I apprehend but one danger from Dennis's disliking our sense, that it may make us think so very well of it, as to become proud and conceited, upon his disapprobation.

[1] This relates to the paper occasioned by Dennis's Remarks upon Cato, called Dr. Norris's *Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis.* P.—A mean performance; but dictated by the most generous principle of Friendship: and meeting in the person defended, a heart incapable of the like exertion of virtue, was not received with that acknowledgment which such a service deserved. W.

The reflection cast on Mr. Addison in this note by Dr. Warburton, is much too harsh and indefensible.

I must not here omit to do justice to Mr. Gay, whose zeal in your concern is worthy a friend and honourer of you. He writ to me in the most pressing terms about it, though with that just contempt of the Critic that he deserves. I think in these days one honest man is obliged to acquaint another who are his friends; when so many mischievous insects are daily at work to make people of merit suspicious of each other; that they may have the satisfaction of seeing them looked upon no better than themselves.

I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XI.

FROM MR. ADDISON.

October 26, 1713.

I WAS extremely glad to receive a letter from you, but more so upon reading the contents of it. The [2]Work you mention, will, I dare say, very sufficiently recommend itself when your name appears with the proposals: and if you think I can any way contribute to the forwarding of them, you cannot lay a greater obligation upon me than by employing me in such an office. As I have an ambition of having it known that you are my friend, I shall be very proud of showing it by this, or any other instance. I question not but your Translation[3] will enrich our

[2] The translation of the Iliad. P.

[3] After this warm encouragement to our author to translate

Tongue and do honour to our Country; for I conclude of it already from those performances with

the Iliad, how painful is it to bring one's mind to any thing like conviction, that Addison could encourage Tickell to publish a rival translation; and much more, that he himself could be the author of this very translation? which yet too many circumstances, alas! concur, to make us believe was really the case. Let us read and duly weigh the following statement of this delicate affair, as it is given by Dr. Hurd in his Discourse on the Life of Bishop Warburton lately published, page 59.

"To this translation are prefixed a DEDICATION, and ADVERTISEMENT. The *latter* is in these words—"I must inform the reader, that when I began this first book I had some thoughts of translating the whole Iliad: but had the pleasure of being diverted from that design, by finding the work was fallen into a much abler hand. I would not therefore be thought to have any other view in publishing this small specimen of Homer's Iliad, than to bespeak, if possible, the favour of the Public to a translation of Homer's Odysseys, wherein I have already made some progress."

"To the words in this advertisement—*when I began this first book*—Mr. Pope affixes this note—*See the first line of the Dedication.*

"Turning to the dedication, we find it begins thus—"When I first entered upon this translation, I was ambitious of dedicating it to the late Lord Halifax—" over-against which words is likewise, entered in Mr. Pope's hand, the following note, *The translator was first known to him* (Lord Halifax) *four months before his death. He died in May* 1715.

"Now, from comparing these two notes together, one sees clearly how Mr. Pope reasoned on the matter. He concluded from Tickell's saying,——*when he first entered on this translation*, that is, *began this first book, he thought of dedicating his work to Lord Halifax*——that he could not have entertained this thought, if he had not at that time been *known* to Lord Halifax. But it was certain, it seems, that Mr. Tickell was *first* known to that Lord only *four months* before his death, in May 1715. Whence it seemed to follow that *this first book* had been written within, or since that time.

"Admitting this conclusion to be rightly made by Mr. Pope,

which you have obliged the public. I would only have you consider how it may most turn to your advantage. Excuse my impertinence in this particular, which proceeds from my zeal for your ease and happiness. The work would cost you a great deal of Time, and, unless you undertake it, will, I am afraid,

it must indeed be allowed that he had much reason for his charge of insincerity on Mr. Addison, who, as a friend that had great influence with the translator, would not have advised, or even permitted, such a design to be entered upon and prosecuted by him at this juncture. But there seems not the least ground for such a conclusion. Lord Halifax was the great patron of wits and poets: and if Tickell had formed his design of translating the Iliad long before Mr. Pope was known to have engaged in that work, he might very well be supposed to think of dedicating it to this Mæcenas, as much a stranger as he then was to him. Nothing is more common than such intentions in literary men; although Mr. Pope might be disposed to conduct himself, in such a case, with more delicacy and dignity.

"I see, then, no reason to infer from the premises, that Mr. Tickell began *his first book* but four months before Lord Halifax's death. For any thing that appears to the contrary, he might have *begun*, or even *finished* it four years before that event, and have only relinquished the thoughts of prosecuting his translation from the time that he *found this work had fallen*, as he says, *into an abler*, that is, Mr. Pope's *hand*.

"These passages, however, of the *Advertisement* and *Dedication*, reflected upon and compared together, furnished Mr. Pope, as I suppose, with the chief of those *odd concurring circumstances*, which, as we are told*, convinced him that this translation of the first book of the Iliad was published with Mr. Addison's participation, if not composed by him. If the work had been begun but *four* months before its appearance, it must have been at least by his allowance and participation: if before that time (Mr. Tickell's acquaintance with Lord Halifax not being of so early a date), it was, most probably, his own composition. And to this latter opinion, it seems, Mr. Pope inclined."

* In the notes on the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.

never be executed by any other; at least I know none of this age that is equal to it besides yourself.

I am at present wholly immersed in country business, and begin to take delight in it. I wish I might hope to see you here some time, and will not despair of it, when you engage in a work that will require solitude and retirement. I am,

Your, etc.

LETTER XII.

FROM MR. ADDISON.

November 2, 1713.

I HAVE received your letter, and am glad to find that you have laid so good a scheme for your great undertaking. I question not but the [4]Prose will require as much care as the Poetry, but the variety will give yourself some relief, and more pleasure to your readers.

You gave me leave once to take the liberty of a friend, in advising you not to content yourself with one half of the nation for your admirers when you might command them all. If I might take the freedom to repeat it, I would on this occasion. I think you are very happy that you are out of the Fray, and I hope all your undertakings will turn to the better account for it.

You see how I presume on your friendship in

[4] The notes to his translation of Homer. W.

taking all this freedom with you: but I already fancy that we have lived many years together in an unreserved conversation, and that we may do so many more, is the sincere wish of

Your, etc.

LETTER XIII.

TO MR. ADDISON.

YOUR last is the more obliging, as it hints at some little niceties in my conduct, which your candour and affection prompt you to recommend to me, and which (so trivial as things of this nature seem) are yet of no slight consequence, to people whom every body talks of, and every body as he pleases. 'Tis a sort of Tax that attends an estate in Parnassus, which is often rated much higher than in proportion to the small possession an author holds. For indeed an author, who is once come upon the town, is enjoyed without being thanked for the pleasure, and sometimes ill-treated by those very persons who first debauched him. Yet, to tell you the bottom of my heart, I am no way displeased that I have offended the violent of all parties already; and at the same time I assure you conscientiously, I feel not the least malevolence or resentment against any of those who misrepresent me, or are dissatisfied with me. This frame of mind is so easy, that I am perfectly content with my condition.

As I hope, and would flatter myself, that you know me and my thoughts so entirely as never to be mistaken in either, so 'tis a pleasure to me that you guessed so right in regard to the author of that Guardian you mentioned. But I am sorry to find it has taken air, that I have some hand in those papers, because I write so very few as neither to deserve the credit of such a report with some people, nor the disrepute of it with others. An honest Jacobite spoke to me the sense or nonsense of the weak part of his party very fairly, that the good people took it ill of me, that I writ with Steele, though upon never so indifferent subjects. This, I know, you will laugh at as well as I do; yet I doubt not but many little calumniators and persons of sour dispositions will take occasion hence to bespatter me. I confess I scorn narrow souls, of all parties, and if I renounce my reason in religious matters, I'll hardly do it in any other.

I can't imagine whence it comes to pass that the few Guardians I have written are so generally known for mine: that in particular which you mention I never discovered to any man but the publisher, till very lately: yet almost every body told me of it.

As to his taking a more politic turn, I cannot any way enter into that secret, nor have I been let into it, any more than into the rest of his politics. Though 'tis said he will take into these papers also several subjects of the politer kind, as before: but, I assure you, as to myself, I have quite done with them for the future. The little I have done, and the great respect I bear Mr. Steele as a man of wit, has

rendered me a suspected Whig to some of the violent; but (as old Dryden said before me) 'tis not the violent I design to please[5].

I generally employ the mornings in painting with Mr. Jervas[6], and the evenings in the conversation of such as I think can most improve my mind, of whatever denomination they are. I ever must set the highest value upon men of truly great, that is honest principles, with equal capacities. The best way I know of overcoming calumny and misconstruction, is by a vigorous perseverance in every thing we know to be right, and a total neglect of all that can ensue from it. 'Tis partly from this maxim that I depend upon your friendship, because I believe it would do justice to my intention in every thing; and give me leave to tell you, that (as the world goes) this is no small assurance I repose in you. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XIV.

TO MR. ADDISON.

December 14, 1713.

I HAVE been lying in wait for my own imagination, this week, and more, and watching what thoughts came up in the whirl of the fancy, that were worth communicating to you in a letter. But I am at length

[5] But poor Dryden could not say this with truth. How much did he write to please the violent!

[6] See the Epistle to him in verse, writ about this time. P.

convinced that my rambling head can produce nothing of that sort; so I must e'en be contented with telling you the old story, that I love you heartily. I have often found by experience, that nature and truth, though never so low or vulgar, are yet pleasing when openly and artlessly represented: it would be diverting to me to read the very letters of an infant, could it write its innocent inconsistencies and tautologies just as it thought them. This makes me hope a letter from me will not be unwelcome to you, when I am conscious I write with more unreservedness than ever man wrote, or perhaps talked to another. I trust your good-nature with the whole range of my follies, and really love you so well, that I would rather you should pardon me than esteem me; since one is an act of goodness and benevolence, the other a kind of constrained deference.

You can't wonder my thoughts are scarce consistent, when I tell you how they are distracted. Every hour of my life my mind is strangely divided; this minute perhaps I am above the stars, with a thousand systems round about me, looking forward into a vast abyss, and losing my whole comprehension in the boundless space of Creation, in dialogues with Whiston and the Astronomers; the next moment I am below all trifles groveling with T * in the very centre of nonsense: now I am recreated with the brisk sallies and quick turns of wit which Mr. Steele in his liveliest and freest humours darts about him; and now levelling my application to the insignificant observations and quirks of Grammar of C * and D *. Good God! what an incongruous animal is man!

how unsettled in his best part, his soul; and how changing and variable in his frame and body! the constancy of the one shook by every notion, the temperament of the other affected by every blast of wind! What is he altogether[7] but one mighty inconsistency; sickness and pain is the lot of one half of him; doubt and fear the portion of the other! What a bustle we make about passing our time, when all our space is but a point! what aims and ambitions are crowded into this little instant of our life, which (as Shakespear finely words it) is rounded with a sleep! Our whole extent of being is no more in the eye of him who gave it, than a scarce perceptible moment of duration. Those animals whose circle of living is limited to three or four hours, as the naturalists tell us, are yet as long-lived and possess as wide a scene of action as man, if we consider him with a view to all Space, and all eternity. Who knows what plots, what achievements a mite may perform in his kingdom of a grain of dust, within his life of some minutes; and of how much less con-

[7] Addison must have smiled at receiving a letter so full of solemn declamation, and so many trite moralities!

"Addison," says Johnson, "never outsteps the modesty of nature, nor raises merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amaze by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can hardly be said to invent, yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of imagination. His prose is the model of the middle style; on grave subjects not formal; on light occasions not grovelling; pure without *scrupulosity*, and exact without apparent *elaboration*." Very different, therefore, from the style of Dr. Johnson himself.

sideration than even this, is the life of man in the sight of God, who is from ever and for ever.

Who that thinks in this train, but must see the world, and its contemptible grandeurs, lessen before him at every thought? 'Tis enough to make one remain stupified in a poize of inaction, void of all desires, of all designs, of all friendships.

But we must return (through our very condition of being) to our narrow selves, and those things that affect ourselves: our passions, our interests flow in upon us, and unphilosophize us into mere mortals. For my part, I never return so much into myself, as when I think of you, whose friendship is one of the best comforts I have for the insignificancy of myself. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XV.

TO MR. ADDISON.

January 30, 1713-14.

YOUR letter found me very busy in my grand undertaking, to which I must wholly give myself up for some time, unless when I snatch an hour to please myself with a distant conversation with you and a few others, by writing. 'Tis no comfortable prospect to be reflecting, that so long a siege as that of Troy lies upon my hands, and the campaign above half over, before I have made any progress. Indeed the

Greek fortification, upon a nearer approach, does not appear so formidable as it did, and I am almost apt to flatter myself, that Homer secretly seems inclined to a correspondence with me, in letting me into a good part of his intentions. There are, indeed, a sort of underling auxiliars to the difficulty of a work, called Commentators and Critics, who would frighten many people by their number and bulk, and perplex our progress under pretence of fortifying their author. These lie very low in the trenches and ditches they themselves have digged, encompassed with dirt of their own heaping up; but, I think, there may be found a method of coming at the main works by a more speedy and gallant way than by mining under ground, that is, by using the poetical engines, wings, and flying over their heads[8].

[9] While I am engaged in the fight, I find you are concerned how I shall be paid, and are solicitous that I may not have the ill fate of many discarded Generals, to be first envied and maligned, then perhaps praised, and lastly neglected. The former (the con-

[8] There is a strange confusion in this long-continued metaphor: sometimes the *fortifications* spoken of are to keep the ignorant out; sometimes to let them in; and sometimes only to quibble with; as in the words [*under pretence of fortifying their author.*] But it is no matter. The Critics and Commentators are to be abused, and, on such an occasion, any thing serves the turn. W.

[9] Throughout all the letters of *Pope* to *Addison*, methinks there is a stiffness and study, that seem to shew they did not contain sentiments that flowed freely and unreservedly from his heart. How did Addison feel while he was reading this letter relating to the translation of Homer, if the supposition mentioned above, in the twelfth letter, was well-founded!

stant attendant upon all great and laudable enterprizes) I have already experienced. Some have said I am not a master in the Greek, who either are so themselves or are not: if they are not, they can't tell; and if they are, they can't without having catechized me. But if they can read, (for, I know, some critics can, and others cannot,) there are fairly lying before them some specimens of my translation from this Author in the Miscellanies, which they are heartily welcome to. I have met with as much malignity another way, some calling me a Tory, because the heads of that party have been distinguishingly favourable to me; some a Whig, because I have been favoured with yours, Mr. Congreve's, and Mr. Craggs's friendship, and of late with my Lord Halifax's patronage. How much more natural a conclusion might be formed, by any good-natured man, that a person who has been well used by all sides, has been offensive to none. This miserable age is so sunk between animosities of Party and those of Religion, that I begin to fear, most men have Politics enough to make (through violence) the best scheme of government a bad one; and Belief enough to hinder their own salvation. I hope, for my own part, never to have more of either than is consistent with common Justice and Charity, and always as much as becomes a Christian and honest man. Though I find it an unfortunate thing to be bred a Papist here, where one is obnoxious to four parts in five, as being so too much or too little; I shall yet be easy under both their mistakes, and be what I more than seem to be, for I suffer for it. God is my witness that I no more envy

you Protestants your places and possessions, than I do our Priests, their charity or learning. I am ambitious of nothing but the good opinion of good men, on both sides: for I know that one virtue of a free spirit is worth more than all the virtues put together of all the narrow-souled people in the world.

I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XVI.

TO MR. ADDISON.

October 10, 1714.

I HAVE been acquainted by[1] one of my friends, who omits no opportunities of gratifying me, that you have lately been pleased to speak of me in a manner which nothing but the real respect I have for you can deserve. May I hope that some late malevolences have lost their effect? Indeed it is neither for me nor my enemies, to pretend to tell you whether I am your friend or not; but if you would judge by probabilities, I beg to know which of your poetical acquaintance has so little interest in pretending to be so? Methinks that no man should question the real friendship of one who desires no real service. I am only to get as much from the Whigs, as I got from the Tories, that is to say, Civility; being neither so proud as to be insensible of any good office, nor so

[1] See a Letter from Mr. Jervas, and the Answer to it. No. 22, 23. P.

humble, as not to dare heartily to depise any man who does me an injustice.

I will not value myself upon having ever guarded all the degrees of respect for you: for (to say the truth) all the world speaks well of you, and I should be under a necessity of doing the same, whether I cared for you or not.

As to what you have said of me, I shall never believe that the Author of Cato can speak one thing and think another. As a proof that I account you sincere, I beg a favour of you: it is, that you would look over the two first books[2] of my translation of Homer, which are in the hands of my lord Halifax. I am sensible how much the reputation of any poetical work will depend upon the character you give it: 'tis therefore some evidence of the trust I repose in your good-will, when I give you this opportunity of speaking ill of me with justice; and yet expect you will tell me your truest thoughts, at the same that you tell others your most favourable ones.

I have a farther request, which I must press with earnestness. My bookseller is reprinting the Essay on Criticism, to which you have done too much honour in your Spectator of No. 253. The period in that paper, where you say, "I have admitted some strokes of ill-nature into that Essay," is the only one I could wish omitted of all you have written; but I would not desire it should be so, unless I had the

[2] This must have been a mortifying and an embarrassing request to Addison, if at that time he had actually translated the first book of Homer. This is the last letter to Addison in this collection.

merit of removing your objection. I beg you but to point[3] out those strokes to me, and, you may be assured, they shall be treated without mercy.

Since we are upon proofs of sincerity (which I am pretty confident will turn to the advantage of us both in each other's opinion) give me leave to name another passage in the same Spectator, which I wish you would alter. It is where you mention an observation upon Homer's Verses of Sisyphus's Stone, as never[4] having been made before by any of the Critics: I have happened to find the same in Dionysius of Halicarnassus's Treatise, Περὶ συνθέσεως ὀνομάτων, who treats very largely upon these verses. I know you will think fit to soften your expression, when you see the passage; which you must needs have read, though it be since slipt out of your memory. I am, with the utmost esteem,

Your, etc.

[3] The mention of these *two* passages in the Spectator must have been displeasing to *Addison;* especially that relating to Dionysius, whose remark Addison had adopted and used as his own.

[4] These words are since left out in Mr. Tickell's Edition, but were extant in all during Mr. Addison's life. P.

There is a long note of Broome's in the Eleventh Book of the Odyssey, on the first verses of this description being clogged with spondees, and long syllables, and a hiatus; whereas, in the last line, there is but one spondee, not one monosyllable, nor one hiatus.

LETTER XVII.

TO THE HONOURABLE ——.

June 8, 1714.

THE question you ask in relation to Mr. Addison and Philips, I shall answer in a few words. Mr. Philips did express himself with much indignation against me one evening at Button's Coffee-house (as I was told) saying, that I was entered[5] into a cabal with Dean Swift and others to write against the Whig-Interest, and in particular to undermine his own reputation, and that of his friends Steele and Addison: but Mr. Philips never opened his lips to my face, on this or any like occasion, though I was

[5] I read in Mr. *Spence's* papers the following account of this quarrel.

"Philips seemed to have been encouraged to abuse me in coffee-houses and conversations: and Gildon wrote a thing about Wycherley, in which he had abused both me and my relations very grossly. Lord Warwick himself told me one day, that it was in vain for me to endeavour to be well with Mr. Addison; that his jealous temper would never admit of a settled friendship between us: and, to convince me of what he had said, assured me that Addison had encouraged Gildon to publish those scandals, and had given him ten guineas after they were published. The next day, while I was heated with what I had heard, I wrote a letter to Mr. Addison, to let him know that I was not unacquainted with this behaviour of his; that if I was to speak severely of him, in return for it, it should be in such a dirty way, that I should rather tell him, himself, fairly of his faults, and allow his good qualities; and that it should be something in the following manner: I then adjoined the first sketch of what has since been called my Satire on Addison: Mr. Addison used me very civilly ever after."

almost every night in the same room with him, nor ever offered me any indecorum. Mr. Addison came to me a night or two after Philips had talked in this idle manner, and assured me of his disbelief of what had been said of the friendship we should always maintain, and desired I would say nothing further of it. My Lord Halifax did me the honour to stir in this matter, by speaking to several people to obviate a false aspersion, which might have done me no small prejudice with one party. However Philips did all he could secretly to continue the report with the Hanover Club, and kept in his hands the subscriptions paid for me to him, as Secretary to that Club. The heads of it have since given him to understand, that they take it ill; but (upon the terms I ought to be with such a man) I would not ask him for this money, but commissioned one of the Players, his equals, to receive it. This is the whole matter; but as to the secret grounds of this malignity, they will make a very pleasant history when we meet. Mr. Congreve and some others have been much diverted with it, and most of the gentlemen of the Hanover Club have made it the subject of their ridicule on their Secretary. It is to this management of Philips that the world owes Mr. Gay's Pastorals. The ingenious author is extremely your servant, and would have complied with your kind invitation, but that he is just now appointed Secretary to my Lord Clarendon, in his embassy to Hanover.

I am sensible of the zeal and friendship with which, I am sure, you will always defend your friend in his absence, from all those little tales and calumnies,

which a man of any genius or merit is born to. I shall never complain while I am happy in such noble defenders, and in such contemptible opponents. May their envy and ill-nature ever increase, to the glory and pleasure of those they would injure; may they represent me what they will, as long as you think me, what I am,

Your, etc.

LETTER XVIII.

July 13, 1714.

You mention the account I gave you some time ago of the things which Philips said in his foolishness; but I can't tell from any thing in your letter, whether you received a long one from me about a fortnight since. It was principally intended to thank you for the last obliging favour you did me; and perhaps for that reason you pass it in silence. I there launched into some account of my temporal affairs, and intend now to give you some hints of my spiritual. The conclusion of your letter draws this upon you, where you tell me you prayed for me. Your proceeding, Sir, is contrary to that of most other friends, who never talk of praying for a man after they have done him a service, but only when they will do him none. Nothing can be more kind than the hint you give me of the vanity of human sciences, which, I assure you, I am daily more convinced of; and indeed I have, for some years past,

looked upon all of them no better than amusements. To make them the ultimate end of our pursuit, is a miserable and short ambition, which will drop from us at every little disappointment here, and even, in case of no disappointments here, will infallibly desert us hereafter. The utmost fame they are capable of bestowing, is never worth the pains they cost us, and the time they lose us. If you attain the top of your desires that way, all those who envy you will do you harm; and of those who admire you, few will do you good. The unsuccessful writers are your declared enemies, and probably the successful your secret ones: for those hate not more to be excelled, than these to be rivalled: and at the upshot, after a life of perpetual application, you reflect that you have been doing nothing for yourself, and that the same or less industry might have gained you a friendship that can never deceive or end, a satisfaction, which praise cannot bestow nor vanity feel, and a glory, which (though in one respect like fame, not to be had till after death) yet shall be felt and enjoyed to eternity. These, dear Sir, are unfeignedly my sentiments, whenever I think at all: for half the things that employ our heads deserve not the name of thoughts, they are only stronger dreams of impressions upon the imagination: our schemes of government, our systems of philosophy, our golden worlds of poetry, are all but so many shadowy images, and airy prospects, which arise to us but so much the livelier and more frequent, as we are more overcast with the darkness, and disturbed with the fumes, of human vanity.

The same thing that makes old men willing to leave

this world, makes me willing to leave this poetry, long habit, and weariness of the same track. Homer will work a cure upon me; fifteen thousand verses are equivalent to fourscore years, to make one old in rhyme: and I should be sorry and ashamed, to go on jingling to the last step, like a waggoner's horse, in the same road, and so leave my bells to the next silly animal that will be proud of them. That man makes a mean figure in the eyes of Reason, who is measuring syllables and coupling rhymes, when he should be mending his own soul, and securing his own immortality. If I had not this opinion, I should be unworthy even of those small and limited parts which God has given me; and unworthy of the friendship of such a man as you. I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XIX.

July 25, 1714.

I HAVE no better excuse to offer you, that I have omitted a task naturally so pleasing to me as conversing upon paper with you, but that my time and eyes have been wholly employed upon Homer[6],

[6] Of the state of his mind, after he had undertaken to translate the Iliad, he gave the following account to Mr. Spence, from whose anecdotes I transcribed it. "What horrible moments does one feel after having engaged for a large work; in the beginning of my translating Homer, I wished any body would hang me, a hundred times! It sat so very heavily on my mind at first, that I often used to dream of it; and even do so sometimes still to this day: my dream usually was, that I had set out on a very

whom, I almost fear, I shall find but one way of imitating, which is, in his blindness. I am perpetually afflicted with head-achs, that very much affect my sight, and indeed since my coming hither I have scarce passed an hour agreeably, except that in which I read your letter. I would seriously have you think, you have no man who more truly knows to place a right value on your friendship, than he who least deserves it on all other accounts than his due sense of it. But, let me tell you, you can hardly guess what a task you undertake, when you profess yourself my friend; there are some Tories who will take you for a Whig, some Whigs who will take you for a Tory, some Protestants who will esteem you a rank Papist, and some Papists who will account you a Heretic.

I find by dear experience, we live in an age, where it is criminal to be moderate; and where no one man can be allowed to be just to all men. The notions of right and wrong are so far strained, that perhaps to be in the right so very violently may be of worse consequence than to be easily and quietly in the wrong. I really wish all men so well, that, I am satisfied, but few can wish me so; but if those few are such as tell me they do, I am content, for they are the best people I know. While you believe me what I profess as to religion, I can bear any thing the bigoted may say; while Mr. Congreve likes my poetry,

long journey, puzzled which way to take, and full of fears that I should never get to the end of it. When I fell into the method of translating thirty or forty lines, before I got up, and piddled with it the rest of the morning, it went on easily enough; and, when I was thoroughly got into the way of it, I did the rest with pleasure."

I can endure Dennis, and a thousand more like him; while the most honest and moral of each party think me no ill man, I can easily bear that the most violent and mad of all parties rise up to throw dirt at me.

I must expect an hundred attacks upon the publication of my Homer. Whoever in our times would be a professor of learning above his fellows, ought at the very first to enter the world with the constancy and resolution of a primitive Christian, and be prepared to suffer all sort of public persecution. It is certainly to be lamented that if any man does but endeavour to distinguish himself, or gratify others by his studies, he is immediately treated as a common enemy, instead of being looked upon as a common friend; and assaulted as generally as if his whole design were to prejudice the State or ruin the Public. I will venture to say, no man ever rose to any degree of perfection in writing, but through obstinacy and an inveterate resolution against the stream of mankind: so that if the world has received any benefit from the labours of the learned, it was in its own despite. For when first they essay their parts, all people in general are prejudiced against new beginners; and when they have got a little above contempt, then some particular persons, who were before unfortunate in their own attempts, are sworn foes to them only because they succeed——Upon the whole, one may say of the best writers, that they pay a severe fine for their fame, which it is always in the power of the most worthless part of mankind to levy upon them when they please. I am, etc.

LETTER XX.

TO MR. JERVAS.

July 28, 1714.

I AM just entered upon the old way of life again, sleep and musing. It is my employment to revive the old of past ages to the present, as it is yours to transmit the young of the present, to the future. I am copying the great Master in one art, with the same love and diligence with which the painters hereafter will copy you in another.

Thus I should begin my Epistle to you, if it were a Dedicatory one. But as it is a friendly letter, you are to find nothing mentioned in your own praise but what one only in the world is witness to, your particular good-natured offices to me.

I am cut out from any thing but common acknowledgments, or common discourse: the first you would take ill, though I told but half what I ought: so, in short, the last only remains.

And as for the last, what can you expect from a man who has not talked these five days? who is withdrawing his thoughts, as far as he can, from all the present world, its customs, and its manners, to be fully possessed and absorpt in the past? When people talk of going to Church, I think of sacrifices and libations; when I see the parson, I address him as Chryses priest of Apollo: and instead of the Lord's prayer, I begin,

God of the silver bow, *etc.*

While you in the world are concerned about the Protestant Succession, I consider only how Menelaus may recover Helen, and the Trojan war be put to a speedy conclusion. I never inquire if the Queen be well or not, but heartily wish to be at Hector's funeral. The only things I regard in this life, are whether my friends are well? whether my Translation go well on? whether Dennis be writing criticisms? whether any body will answer him, since I don't? and whether Lintot be not yet broke?

I am, etc.

LETTER XXI.

TO THE SAME.

August 16, 1714.

I THANK you for your good offices, which are numberless. Homer advances so fast, that he begins to look about for the ornaments he is to appear in, like a modish modern author.

> Picture in the front,
> With bays and wicked rhyme upon't.

I have the greatest proof in nature at present of the amusing power of Poetry, for it takes me up so entirely, that I scarce see what passes under my nose, and hear nothing that is said about me. To follow poetry as one ought, one must forget father and mother, and cleave to it alone. My Reverie has been so deep, that I have scarce had an interval to think

myself uneasy in the want of your company. I now and then just miss you as I step into bed; this minute indeed I want extremely to see you, the next I shall dream of nothing but the taking of Troy, or the recovery of Briseis.

I fancy no friendship is so likely to prove lasting as ours, because, I am pretty sure, there never was a friendship of so easy a nature. We neither of us demand any mighty things from each other; what Vanity we have expects its gratification from other people. It is not I that am to tell you what an Artist you are, nor is it you that are to tell me what a Poet I am: but 'tis from the world abroad we hope (piously hope) to hear these things. At home we follow our business, when we have any; and think and talk most of each other when we have none. 'Tis not unlike the happy friendship of a stayed man and his wife, who are seldom so fond as to hinder the business of the house from going on all day, or so indolent as not to find consolation in each other every evening. Thus well-meaning couples hold in amity to the last, by not expecting too much from human nature; while romantic friendships, like violent loves, begin with disquiets, proceed to jealousies, and conclude in animosities. I have lived to see the fierce advancement, the sudden turn, and the abrupt period, of three or four of these enormous friendships, and am perfectly convinced of the truth of a maxim we once agreed in, that nothing hinders the constant agreement of people who live together, but merely vanity; a secret insisting upon what they think their dignity of merit, and an inward expectation of such an Over-measure of

deference and regard, as answers to their own extravagant false scale; and which nobody can pay, because none but themselves can tell, exactly, to what pitch it amounts.

I am, etc.

LETTER XXII.

MR. JERVAS TO MR. POPE.

August 20, 1714.

I HAVE a particular to tell you at this time, which pleases me so much, that you must expect a more than ordinary alacrity in every turn. You know I could keep you in suspence for twenty lines, but I will tell you directly, that Mr. Addison and I have had a conversation, that it would have been worth your while to have been placed behind the wainscoat, or behind some half-length picture, to have heard. He assured me that he would make use not only of his interest, but of his art, to do you some service; he did not mean his art of poetry, but his art at Court; and he is sensible that nothing can have a better air for himself than moving in your favour, especially since insinuations were spread, that he did not care you should prosper too much as a Poet. He protests that it shall not be his fault, if there is not the best intelligence in the world, and the most hearty friendship, etc. He owns, he was afraid Dr. Swift might have carried you too far among the enemy, during the heat of the animosity; but now all is safe,

and you are escaped, even in his opinion. I promised in your name, like a good Godfather, not that you should renounce the devil and all his works, but that you would be delighted to find him your friend, merely for his own sake; therefore prepare yourself for some civilities.

I have done Homer's head, shadowed and heightened carefully; and I inclose the outline of the same size, that you may determine whether you would have it so large, or reduced to make room for feuillage or laurel round the oval, or about the square of the Busto? perhaps there is something more solemn in the image itself, if I can get it well performed.

If I have been instrumental in bringing you and Mr. Addison together with all sincerity, I value myself upon it as an acceptable piece of service to such a one as I know you to be.

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIII.

MR. POPE'S ANSWER.

August 27, 1714.

I AM just arrived from Oxford, very well diverted and entertained there. Every one is much concerned for the Queen's death. No panegyrics ready yet for the King.

I admire your whig-principles of resistance exceedingly, in the spirit of the Barcelonians: I join in your wish for them. Mr. Addison's verses on Liberty, in

his Letter from Italy, would be a good form of prayer in my opinion, *O Liberty! thou Goddess heavenly bright*[7]! etc.

What you mention of the friendly office you endeavoured to do betwixt Mr. Addison and me, deserves acknowledgments on my part. You thoroughly know my regard to his character, and my propensity to testify it by all ways in my power. You as thoroughly know the scandalous meanness of that proceeding which was used by Philips, to make a man I so highly value, suspect my dispositions towards him. But as, after all, Mr. Addison must be the judge in what regards himself, and has seemed to be no very just one to me; so, I must own to you, I expect nothing but civility from him, how much soever I wish for his friendship. As for any offices of real kindness or service which it is in his power to do me, I should be ashamed to receive them from any man who had no better opinion of my Morals, than to think me a Party-man: nor of my Temper than to believe me capable of maligning, or envying another's reputation as a poet. So I leave it to time to convince him as to both, to shew him the shallow depths of those half-witted creatures who mis-informed him, and to prove that I am incapable of endeavouring to lessen a person whom I would be proud to imitate, and therefore ashamed to flatter. In a word, Mr. Addison[8] is sure

[7] Lowth in his Grammar censures the using adjectives, as *heavenly*, for adverbs; and mentions this line as an example.

[8] Lady Wortley Montague, in one of her sprightly and elegant letters to Pope, says; "I received the news of Mr. Addison's being declared Secretary of State with the less surprize, in that I know that post was offered to him before. At that time he de-

of my respect at all times, and of my real friendship, whenever he shall think fit to know me for what I am.

For all that passed betwixt Dr. Swift and me, you know the whole (without reserve) of our correspondence. The engagements I had to him were such as the actual services he had done me in relation to the subscription for Homer, obliged me to. I must have leave to be grateful to him, and to any one who serves me, let him be never so obnoxious to any party: nor did the Tory-party ever put me to the hardship of asking this leave, which is the greatest obligation I owe to it; and I expect no greater from the Whig-party than the same liberty.——A curse on the word Party, which I have been forced to use so often in this period! I wish the present reign[9] may put an end to the distinction, that there may be no other for the future than that of Honest and Knave, Fool and Man of sense; these two sorts must always be enemies; but for the rest may all people do as you and I, believe what they please, and be friends.

I am, etc.

clined it; and I really believe he would have done well to have declined it now: such a post as that, and such a wife as the Countess, do not seem to be, in prudence, eligible for a man that is asthmatic; and we may see the day when he will be glad to resign them both. It is well that he laid aside the thoughts of the voluminous Dictionary, of which I have heard you, or somebody else, frequently make mention.—*Constantinople*, 1717."

[9] Unfortunately it did not put an end to party-distinctions; but by proscribing the Tories, heightened and continued the animosity of both parties.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE EARL OF HALIFAX.

My Lord, December 1, 1714.

I am obliged to you both for the favours you have done me, and for those you intend me. I distrust neither your will nor your memory, when it is to do good: and if ever I become troublesome or solicitous, it must not be out of expectation, but out of gratitude. Your Lordship may either cause me to live agreeably in the town, or contentedly in the country, which is really all the difference I set between an easy fortune and a small one. It is indeed a high strain of generosity in you, to think of making me easy all my life, only because I have been so happy as to divert you some few hours: but if I may have leave to add, it is because you think me no enemy to my native country, there will appear a better reason; for I must of consequence be very much (as I sincerely am)

Yours, etc.

LETTER XXV[1].

DR. PARNELLE TO MR. POPE[2].

I AM writing to you a long letter, but all the tediousness I feel in it is, that it makes me during the time think more intently of my being far from you. I fancy, if I were with you, I could remove some of the uneasiness which you may have felt from the opposition of the world, and which you should be ashamed to feel, since it is but the testimony which one part of it gives you, that your merit is unquestionable. What would you have otherwise, from ignorance, envy, or those tempers which vie with you in your own way? I know this in mankind, that when our ambition is unable to attain its end, it is not only wearied, but exasperated too at the vanity of its labours; then we speak ill of happier studies, and sighing, condemn the excellence which we find above our reach.——

My [3]Zoilus[4], which you used to write about, I

[1] This, and the three Extracts following, concerning the Translation of the first Iliad, set on foot by Mr. Addison, Mr. Pope has omitted in his first Edition. P.

[2] When Pope published Parnelle's charming translation of the Pervigilium Veneris, which certainly was not written by Catullus, but is of a later date, he did not print the Latin verses as if they were Trochaics. It were to be wished we had as good a translation of that noble and spirited poem, so singular in its kind, the *Atys*, the numbers of which are so expressive of distraction and enthusiam.

[3] Printed for B. Lintot, 1715, 8°, and afterward added to the last edition of his poems. P.

[4] Parnelle assisted Pope by giving him the Essay on Homer's

finished last spring, and left in town. I waited till I came up to send it to you, but not arriving here before your book was out, imagined it a lost piece of labour. If you will still have it, you need only write me word.

I have here seen the First Book of Homer[5], which came out at a time when it could not but appear as a kind of setting up against you. My opinion is, that you may, if you please, give them thanks who writ it. Neither the numbers nor the spirit have an equal mastery with yours; but what surprizes me more is, that, a scholar being concerned, there should happen to be some mistakes in the author's sense; such as putting the light of Pallas's eyes into the eyes of Achilles, making the taunt of Achilles to Agamemnon (that he should have spoils when Troy should be taken) to be a cool and serious proposal; the translating what you call *Ablution* by the word *Offals*, and so leaving water out of the rite of lustration, etc. but you must have taken notice of all this before. I write not to inform you, but to shew I always have you at heart.

I am, etc.

Life; in which, though there appears a good deal of research and ancient learning, yet it is delivered in so uncouth and harsh a style, even after it was repeatedly corrected and altered, that Pope always continued much dissatisfied with it.

[5] Written by Mr. Addison, and published in the name of Mr. Tickell. P.

EXTRACT *from a* LETTER *of the Rev. Dr.* BERKELEY, *Dean of* Londonderry.

July 7, 1715.

—Some days ago, three or four gentlemen and myself, exerting that right which all readers pretend to over authors, sate in judgment upon the two new Translations of the first Iliad. Without partiality to my countrymen, I assure you, they all gave the preference where it was due; being unanimously of opinion, that yours was equally just to the sense with Mr. —'s, and without comparison more easy, more poetical, and more sublime. But I will say no more on such a thread-bare subject, as your late performance is at this time.

I am, etc.

EXTRACT *from a* LETTER *of Mr.* GAY *to Mr.* POPE.

July 8, 1715.

—I have just set down Sir Samuel Garth at the Opera. He bid me tell you, that every body is pleased with your translation, but a few at Button's: and that Sir Richard Steele told him, that Mr. Addison said the other translation was the best that ever was in any language[6]. He treated me with extreme

[6] Sir Richard Steele afterward, in his preface to an Edition of the Drummer, a Comedy by Mr. Addison, shews it to be his opinion that "Mr. Addison himself was the person who translated this book." P.

civility, and out of kindness gave me a squeeze by the fore-finger.—I am informed that at Button's your character is made very free with, as to Morals, etc. and Mr. Addison says, that your translation and Tickell's are both very well done, but that the latter has more of Homer.

I am, etc.

EXTRACT *from a* LETTER *of Dr.* ARBUTHNOT *to Mr.* POPE.

July 9, 1715.

—I congratulate you upon Mr. T * 's first book. It does not indeed want its merit; but I was strangely disappointed in my expectation of a translation nicely true to the Original; whereas in those parts where the greatest exactness seems to be demanded, he has been the least careful, I mean the history of ancient ceremonies and rites, etc. in which you have with great judgment been exact.

I am, etc.

LETTER XXVI.

MR. POPE TO THE HONOURABLE JAMES CRAGGS, ESQ.

July 15, 1715.

I LAY hold of the opportunity given me by my Lord Duke of Shrewsbury, to assure you of the continuance of that esteem and affection I have long born you,

and the memory of so many agreeable conversations as we have passed together. I wish it were a compliment to say, such conversations as are not to be found on this side the water: for the Spirit of dissention is gone forth among us: nor is it a wonder that Button's is no longer Button's, when old England is no longer old England, that region of hospitality, society, and good humour. Party affects us all, even the wits, though they gain as little by politics as they do by their wit. We talk much of fine sense, refined sense, and exalted sense; but for use and happiness, give me a little common sense. I say this in regard to some gentlemen, professed Wits of our acquaintance, who fancy they can make Poetry of consequence at this time of day, in the midst of this raging fit of Politics. For they tell me, the busy part of the nation are not more divided about the Whig and Tory, than these idle fellows of the feather about Mr. T **'s** and my Translation. I (like the Tories) have the town in general, that is the mob, on my side; but it is usual with the smaller party to make up in industry what they want in number, and that is the case with the little Senate of Cato. However, if our principles be well considered, I must appear a brave Whig, and Mr. T. a rank Tory: I translated Homer for the public in general, he to gratify the inordinate desire of one man only. We have, it seems, a great Turk[7] in poetry, who can never bear a brother on the throne; and has his mutes too, a set of nodders, winkers, and whisperers, whose business is to strangle all other

[7] He afterward versified this thought, and indeed many others from his letters. Milton did the same from his prose works.

offsprings of wit in their birth. The new translator of Homer is the humblest slave he has, that is to say, his first Minister; let him receive the honours he gives me, but receive them with fear and trembling; let him be proud of the approbation of his absolute Lord, I appeal to the people, as my rightful judges and masters; and if they are not inclined to condemn me, I fear no arbitrary highflying proceeding from the small Court-faction at Button's. But after all I have said of this great man, there is no rupture between us. We are each of us so civil and obliging, that neither thinks he is obliged: and I, for my part, treat with him, as we do with the Grand Monarch; who has too many great qualities not to be respected, though we know he watches any occasion to oppress us.

When I talk of Homer, I must not forget the early present you made me of Monsieur de la Motte's book: and I can't conclude this letter without telling you a melancholy piece of news, which affects our very entrails, L * is dead, and soupes are no more! You see I write in the old familiar way. "This is not to the minister, but to the friend[8]." However, it is some mark of uncommon regard to the minister that I steal an expression from a Secretary of State.

I am, etc.

[8] Alluding to St. John's Letter to Prior published in the *Report of the Secret Committee.* W.

LETTER XXVII.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

January 16, 1714-15.

METHINKS when I write to you, I am making a confession; I have got (I can't tell how) such a custom of throwing myself out upon paper without reserve. You were not mistaken in what you judged of my temper of mind when I writ last. My faults will not be hid from you, and perhaps it is no dispraise to me that they will not: the cleanness and purity of one's mind is never better proved, than in discovering its own fault at first view; as when a stream shews the dirt at its bottom, it shews also the transparency of the water.

My spleen was not occasioned, however, by any thing an abusive angry critic could write of me. I take very kindly your heroic manner of congratulation upon this scandal; for I think nothing more honourable than to be involved in the same fate with all the great and the good that ever lived; that is, to be envied and censured by bad writers.

You do more than answer my expectations of you, in declaring how well you take my freedom, in sometimes neglecting, as I do, to reply to your letters so soon as I ought. Those who have a right taste of the substantial part of friendship, can wave the ceremonial: a friend is the only one that will bear the omission; and one may find who is not so by the very trial of it.

As to any anxiety I have concerning the fate of my Homer, the care is over with me: the world must be the judge, and I shall be the first to consent to the justice of its judgment, whatever it be. I am not so arrant an author as even to desire, that if I am in the wrong, all mankind should be so.

I am mightily pleased with a saying of Monsieur Tourreil; "when a man writes he ought to animate himself with the thoughts of pleasing all the world: but he is to renounce that desire or hope, the very moment the book goes out of his hands."

I write this from Binfield, whither I came yesterday, having passed a few days in my way with my Lord Bolingbroke; I go to London in three days time, and will not fail to pay a visit to Mr. M——, whom I saw not long since at my Lord Hallifax's. I hoped from thence he had some hopes of advantage from the present administration: for few people (I think) but I, pay respects to great men without any prospects. I am in the fairest way in the world of being not worth a groat, being born both a Papist and a Poet. This puts me in mind of re-acknowledging your continued endeavours to enrich me. But, I can tell you, 'tis to no purpose, for without the *Opes, æquum mi animum ipse parabo.*

LETTER XXVIII.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

March, 19, 1714-15.

THE Farce of the What-d'ye-call-it[9] has occasioned many different speculations in the town. Some looked upon it as a mere jest upon the Tragic poets, others as a satire upon the late War. Mr. Cromwell hearing none of the words, and seeing the action to be tragical, was much astonished to find the audience laugh; and says the Prince and Princess must doubtless be under no less amazement on the same account. Several templars and others of the more vociferous kind of critics, went with a resolution to hiss, and confessed they were forced to laugh so much, that they forgot the design they came with. The Court in general has in a very particular manner come into the jest, and the three first nights (notwithstanding two of them were court-nights) were distinguished by very full audiences of the first Quality. The common people of the pit and gallery received it at first with great gravity and sedateness, some few with tears; but after the third day they also took the hint, and have ever since been very loud in their claps. There are still some sober men who cannot be of the general opinion; but the laughers are so much the majority, that one or two critics seem determined to undeceive the town at their proper cost, by

[9] Written by Mr. Gay. W.

writing grave dissertations against it; to encourage them in which laudable design, it is resolved a Preface shall be prefixed to the Farce, in vindication of the nature and dignity of this new way of writing.

Yesterday Mr. Steele's affair was decided: I am sorry I can be of no other opinion than yours[1], as to his whole carriage and writings of late. But certainly he has not only been punished by others, but suffered much even from his own party in the point of character, nor (I believe) received any amends in that of interest, as yet, whatever may be his prospects for the future.

This gentleman, among a thousand others, is a great instance of the fate of all who are carried away by party-spirit, of any side. I wish all violence may succeed as ill: but am really amazed that so much of that sour and pernicious quality should be joined with so much natural good humour as, I think, Mr. Steele is possessed of.

I am, etc.

LETTER XXIX.

TO MR. CONGREVE.

April 7, 1715.

Mr. Pope is going to Mr. Jervas's, where Mr. Addison is sitting for his picture; in the mean time, amidst clouds of tobacco at a coffee-house, I write

[1] Hence it appears that Congreve was candid and moderate in his political opinions.

this letter. There is a grand revolution at Will's; Morrice has quitted for a coffee-house in the city, and Titcomb is restored, to the great joy of Cromwell, who was at a great loss for a person to converse with upon the fathers and church-history; the knowledge I gain from him is entirely in painting and poetry; and Mr. Pope owes all his skill in astronomy to him and Mr. Whiston, so celebrated of late for his discovery of the longitude in an extraordinary copy of verses[2]. Mr. Rowe's Jane Gray is to be played in Easter-week, when Mrs. Oldfield is to personate a character directly opposite to female nature; for what woman ever despised Sovereignty? You know Chaucer has a tale where a knight saves his head, by discovering it was the thing which all women most coveted. Mr. Pope's Homer is retarded by the great rains that have fallen of late, which causes the sheets to be long a drying: this gives Mr. Lintot great uneasiness, who is now endeavouring to corrupt the Curate of his parish to pray for fair weather, that his work may go on. There is a six-penny Criticism lately published upon the tragedy of the What-d'ye-call-it, wherein he with much judgment and learning calls me a blockhead, and Mr. Pope a knave. His grand charge is against the Pilgrim's Progress being read, which he says, is directly levelled at Cato's reading Plato; to back this censure,

[2] Called, *An Ode on the Longitude*, in Swift and Pope's Miscellanies. P.

A very flat and feeble attack truly, on a man respectable for integrity, simplicity of manners, and extensive learning, though his opinions may be erroneous!

he goes on to tell you, that the Pilgrim's Progress being mentioned to be the eighth edition, makes the reflection evident, the Tragedy of Cato having just eight times (as he quaintly expresses it) visited the press. He has also endeavoured to show, that every particular passage of the play alludes to some fine part of tragedy, which, he says, I have injudiciously and profanely abused[3]. Sir Samuel Garth's poem upon my Lord Clare's house, I believe, will be published in Easter-week.

Thus far Mr. Gay, who has in his letter forestalled all the subjects of diversion; unless it should be one to you to say, that I sit up till two a clock over Burgundy and Champagne; and am become so much a rake that I shall be ashamed in a short time to be thought to do any sort of business. I fear I must get the gout by drinking; purely for a fashionable pretence to sit still long enough to translate four books of Homer. I hope you'll by that time be up again, and I may succeed to the bed and couch of my predecessor: pray cause the stuffing to be repaired, and the crutches shortened for me. The calamity of your gout is what all your friends, that is to say, all that know you, must share in; we desire you in your return to condole with us; who are under a persecution, and much afflicted with a distemper which proves mortal to many poets, a Criticism. We have indeed some relieving intervals of laughter, (as you know there are in some diseases,)

[3] This curious piece was entitled, A compleat Key to the What-d'ye-call-it, written by one Griffin a player, assisted by Lewis Theobald. P.

and it is the opinion of divers good guessers, that the last fit will not be more violent than advantageous; for poets assailed by critics, are like men bitten by Tarantula's, they dance on so much the faster.

Mr. Thomas Burnet hath played the precursor to the coming of Homer, in a treatise called Homerides. He has since risen very much in his criticisms, and after assaulting Homer, made a daring attack upon the What-d'ye-call-it[4]. Yet is there not a Proclamation issued for the burning of Homer and the Pope by the common hangman; nor is the What-d'ye-call-it yet silenced by the Lord Chamberlain.

Your, etc.

LETTER XXX.

FROM MR. CONGREVE.

May 6.

I HAVE the pleasure of your very kind letter. I have always been obliged to you for your friendship and concern for me, and am more affected with it than I will take upon me to express in this letter. I do assure you there is no return wanting on my part, and am very sorry I had not the good luck to see the Dean before I left the town: it is a great pleasure to me, and not a little vanity to think that he misses me. As to my health, which you are so kind to enquire after, it is not worse than in London: I am almost afraid yet to say that it is better, for I cannot reason-

[4] In one of his papers called *The Grumbler*. P.

ably expect much effect from these waters in so short a time; but in the main they seem to agree with me. Here is not one creature that I know, which next to the few I would chuse, contributes very much to my satisfaction. At the same time that I regret the want of your conversation, I please myself with thinking that you are where you first ought to be, and engaged where you cannot do too much. Pray, give my humble service and best wishes to your good mother. I am sorry you don't tell me how Mr. Gay does in his Health: I should have been glad to have heard he was better. My young Amanuensis, as you call him, I am afraid, will prove but a wooden one: and you know *ex quovis ligno*, etc. You will pardon Mrs. R—'s pedantry, and believe me to be

Your, etc.

P. S. By the inclosed you will see I am like to be impressed, and enrolled in the List of Mr. Curl's Authors; but I thank God! I shall have your company. I believe it high time you should think of administering another Emetic[5].

[5] We cannot but wish for more of Mr. Congreve's Letters written with the true and proper ease of an epistolary style, and, therefore, totally different from those of his master, *Wycherley*, whom he too closely imitated in his Comedies. Congreve is said to have written nothing in the Tatler, Spectator, or Guardian, but the well-drawn character of Aspasia, in the forty-second number of the Tatler.

LETTERS

TO AND FROM

SEVERAL PERSONS.

From 1714 to 1721.

LETTER I.

THE REV. DEAN BERKELEY[6] TO MR. POPE.

Leghorn, May 1, 1714.

As I take ingratitude to be a greater crime than impertinence, I choose rather to run the risk of being thought guilty of the latter, than not to return you my thanks for a very agreeable entertain-

[6] We may with justice apply to this truly great man, *Berkeley*, what he himself so finely says of his favourite *Plato*; "That he hath joined with an *Imagination* the most splendid and magnificent, an *Intellect* not less deep and clear." A morsel of poetry from such a writer ought to be preserved as a literary curiosity, and a proof of the great variety of his talents; especially as it was written, almost with a prophetic spirit, above seventy years ago, and consequently before the events, in the country alluded to, could possibly have been foreseen. He entitled them,

On the Prospect of planting Arts and Learning in America.

The Muse, disgusted at an age and clime
Barren of every glorious theme,
In distant lands now waits a better time,
Producing subjects worthy fame:

ment you just now gave me. I have accidentally met with your Rape of the Lock here, having never seen it before. Style, painting, judgment, spirit, I had already admired in other of your writings; but in this I am charmed with the magic of your invention, with all those images, allusions, and inexplicable beauties, which you raise so surprisingly, and at the same time so naturally, out of a trifle. And yet I cannot say that I was more pleased with the reading of it, than I am with the pretext it gives me to renew in your thoughts, the remembrance of one who values no happiness beyond the friendship of men of wit, learning, and good-nature.

I remember to have heard you mention some half-formed design of coming to Italy. What might we

In happy climes, where, from the genial sun
And virgin earth, such scenes ensue,
The force of Art by Nature seems outdone,
And fancied beauties by the true:

In happy climes, the seat of innocence,
Where Nature guides, and Virtue rules,
Where men shall not impose, for truth and sense,
The pedantry of courts and schools:

There shall be sung another golden age,
The rise of empire and of arts,
The good and great inspiring epic rage,
The wisest heads and noblest hearts.

Not such as Europe breeds in her decay;
Such as she bred when fresh and young,
When heav'nly flame did animate her clay,
By future poets shall be sung.

Westward the course of empire takes its way;
The four first acts already past,
A fifth shall close the drama with the day;
Time's noblest offspring is the last.

not expect from a Muse that sings so well in the bleak climate of England, if she felt the same warm sun, and breathed the same air with Virgil and Horace?

There are here an incredible number of Poets, that have all the inclination, but want the genius, or perhaps the art, of the Ancients. Some among them who understand English, begin to relish our Authors; and I am informed, that at Florence they have translated Milton into Italian verse. If one who knows so well how to write like the old Latin poets came among them, it would probably be a means to retrieve them from their cold, trivial conceits, to an imitation of their predecessors.

As merchants, antiquaries, men of pleasure, etc. have all different views in travelling; I know not whether it might not be worth a poet's while, to travel, in order to store his mind with strong images of Nature.

Green fields and groves, flowery meadows and purling streams, are no where in such perfection as in England: but if you would know lightsome days, warm suns, and blue skies, you must come to Italy: and to enable a man to describe rocks[7] and precipices, it is absolutely necessary that he pass the Alps.

You will easily perceive that it is self-interest makes me so fond of giving advice to one who has no need of it. If you came into these parts I should

[7] When Thomson was told that Glover was writing an epic poem, he exclaimed, "He write an epic poem, a Londoner, who has never seen a mountain!"

fly to see you. I am here (by the favour of my good friend the Dean of St. Patrick's) in quality of Chaplain to the Earl of Peterborough; who above three months since left the greatest part of his family in this town. God knows how long we shall stay here.

I am

Your, etc.

LETTER II.

MR. POPE TO MR. JERVAS IN IRELAND.

June 9, 1716.

THOUGH, as you rightly remark, I pay my tax but once in half a year, yet you shall see by this letter upon the neck of my last, that I pay a double tax, as we non-jurors ought to do. Your acquaintance on this side of the sea are under terrible apprehensions from your long stay in Ireland, that you may grow too polite for them; for we think (since the great success of such a play as the Non-juror) that politeness is gone over the water: but others are of opinion it has been longer among you, and was introduced much about the same time with Frogs, and with equal Success. Poor Poetry! the little that is left of it here longs to cross the seas, and leave Eusden in full and peaceable possession of the British laurel: and we begin to wish you had the singing of our poets, as well as the croaking of our frogs, to yourselves, *in sæcula sæculorum.* It would be well in exchange, if Parnelle, and two or three more of

your Swans would come hither, especally that Swan who, like a true modern one, does not sing at all, Dr. Swift. I am (like the rest of the world) a sufferer by his idleness. Indeed I hate that any man should be idle, while I must translate and comment; and I may the more sincerely wish for good poetry from others, because I am become a Person out of the question; for a Translator is no more a Poet, than a Taylor is a Man.

You are, doubtless, persuaded of the validity of that famous verse,

'Tis Expectation makes a Blessing dear:

but why would you make your friends fonder of you than they are? There is no manner of need of it. We begin to expect you no more than Anti-christ; a man that hath absented himself so long from his friends, ought to be put into the Gazette.

Every body here has great need of you. Many faces have died for want of your pencil, and blooming Ladies have withered in expecting your return. Even Frank and Betty (that constant pair) cannot console themselves for your absence; I fancy they will be forced to make their own picture in a pretty babe, before you come home: 'twill be a noble subject for a family-piece. Come then, and having peopled Ireland with a world of beautiful shadows, come to us, and see with that eye (which, like the eye of the world, creates beauties by looking on them); see, I say, how England has altered the airs of all its heads in your absence: and with what sneaking city attitudes our most celebrated per-

sonages appear, in the mere mortal works of our painters.

Mr. Fortescue is much yours; Gay commemorates you; and lastly (to climb by just steps and degrees) my Lord Burlington desires you may be put in mind of him. His gardens flourish, his structures rise, his pictures arrive, and (what is far more valuable than all) his own good qualities daily extend themselves to all about him: of whom I the meanest (next to some Italian Fidlers, and English Bricklayers) am a living instance. Adieu.

LETTER III.

TO THE SAME.

November 14, 1716.

If I had not done my utmost to lead my life so pleasantly as to forget all misfortunes, I should tell you I reckon your absence no small one; but I hope you have also had many good and pleasant reasons to forget your friends on this side the world. If a wish could transport me to you and your present companions, I could do the same. Dr. Swift, I believe, is a very good landlord, and a chearful host at his own table: I suppose he has perfectly learnt himself, what he has taught so many others, *rupta non insanire lagena:* else he would not make a proper host for your humble servant, who (you know) though he drinks a glass as seldom as any man, con-

trives to break one as often. But 'tis a consolation to me, that I can do this, and many other enormities under my own roof.

But that you and I are upon equal terms, in all friendly laziness, and have taken an inviolable oath to each other, always to do what we will; I should reproach you for so long a silence. The best amends you can make for saying nothing to me, is by saying all the good you can of me, which is, that I heartily love and esteem the Dean and Dr. Parnelle.

Gay is yours and theirs. His spirit is awakened very much in the cause of the Dean, which has broke forth in a courageous couplet or two upon Sir Richard Blackmore; he has printed it with his name to it, and bravely assigns no other reason, than that the said Sir Richard has abused Dr. Swift. I have also suffered in the like cause, and shall suffer more unless Parnelle sends me his Zoilus and Book-worm (which the Bishop of Clogher, I hear, greatly extolls) it will be shortly *concurrere Bellum atque Virum* ——I love you all, as much as I despise most wits in this dull country. Ireland has turned the tables upon England; and if I have no poetical friend in my own nation, I'll be as proud as Scipio, and say (since I am reduced to skin and bone) *Ingrata patria, ne* ossa *quidem habeas.*

LETTER IV.

TO THE SAME.

November 29, 1716.

THAT you have not heard from me of late, ascribe not to the usual laziness of your correspondent, but to a ramble to Oxford, where your name is mentioned with honour, even in a land flowing with Tories. I had the good fortune there to be often in the conversation of Dr. Clarke[8]: he entertained me with several drawings, and particularly with the original designs of Inigo Jones's Whitehall. I there saw and reverenced some of your first pieces; which future painters are to look upon as we Poets do on the Culex of Virgil and Batrachom. of Homer.

Having named this latter piece, give me leave to ask what is become of Dr. Parnelle and his Frogs[9]? *Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis*, might be Horace's wish, but will never be mine while I have such *meorums* as Dr. Parnelle and Dr. Swift. I hope the Spring will restore you to us, and with you all the beauties and colours of nature. Not but I congratulate you on the pleasure you must take in being admired in your own country, which so seldom happens to Prophets and Poets; but in this you have the ad-

[8] Of All Souls College in Oxford; a virtuoso and man of taste. The drawings here mentioned he bequeathed to the Library of Worcester College in Oxford.

[9] He translated the Batrachom. of Homer, which is printed amongst his Poems. W.

vantage of Poets; you are master of an art that must prosper and grow rich, as long as people love, or are proud of themselves, or their own persons. However, you have stayed long enough, methinks, to have painted all the numberless Histories of old Ogygia. If you have begun to be historical, I recommend to your hand the story which every pious Irishman ought to begin with, that of St. Patrick; to the end you may be obliged (as Dr. P. was when he translated the Batrachomuomachia) to come into England, to copy the frogs, and such other vermin as were never seen in that land since the time of that Confessor.

I long to see you a History painter[1]. You have already done enough for the private; do something for the public; and be not confined, like the rest, to draw only such silly stories as our own faces tell of us. The Ancients too expect you should do them right; those Statues from which you learned your beautiful and noble Ideas, demand it as a piece of gratitude from you, to make them truly known to all nations, in the account you intend to write of their Characters. I hope you think more warmly than ever of that design[2].

As to your enquiry about your house, when I come

[1] The partiality of friendship must excuse this wish. *Jervas* had no pretensions, nor any thing like genius, for History-painting.

[2] Mr. Pope used to say he had an acquaintance with three eminent Painters, all men of ingenuity, but without common sense. Instead of valuing themselves on their performances in their own art, where they had merit; the one was deep in military Architecture, without Mathematics; the other in the doctrine of Fate, without Philosophy; and the third in the translation of Don Quixote, without Spanish. W.

within the walls, they put me in mind of those of Carthage, where your friend, like the wandering Trojan,

animum Pictura pascit inani.

For the spacious mansion, like a Turkish Caravanserah, entertains the vagabonds with only bare lodging. I rule the family very ill, keep bad hours, and lend out your pictures about the town. See what it is to have a poet in your house! Frank indeed does all he can in such a circumstance; for, considering he has a wild beast in it, he constantly keeps the door chained. Every time it is opened the links rattle, the rusty hinges roar. The house seems so sensible that you are its support, that it is ready to drop in your absence; but I still trust myself under its roof, as depending that Providence will preserve so many Raphaels, Titians, and Guidos, as are lodged in your Cabinet. Surely the sins of one Poet can hardly be so heavy, as to bring an old house over the heads of so many painters. In a word, your house is falling; but what of that! I am only a lodger[3].

LETTER V.

THE HON. MR. CRAGGS TO MR. POPE.

Paris, Sept. 2, 1716.

LAST post brought me the favour of your letter of the 19th August, O. S. It would be taking too

[3] Alluding to the story of the Irishman. W.

much upon me to decide, that it was a witty one; I never pretend to more judgment than to know what pleases me, and can assure you, it was a very agreeable one. The proof I can give you of my sincerity in this opinion, is, that I hope and desire you would not stop at this, but continue more of them.

I am in a place where pleasure is continually flowing. The Princes set the example, and the subjects follow at a distance. The Ladies are of all parties[4], by which means the conversation of the men is very much softened[5] and fashioned from those blunt disputes on Politics, and rough jests, we are so guilty of; while the freedom of the women takes away all formality and constraint. I must own, at the same time, these Beauties are a little too artificial for my taste: you have seen a French picture, the Original is more painted, and such a crust of powder and essence in their hair, that you can see no difference between black and red. By disusing stays, aud indulging themselves at table, they run out of all shape; but as to that, they may give a good reason, they prefer conveniency to parade, and are, by this means, as ready, as they are generally willing, to be charitable.

I am surprized to find I have wrote so much scandal; I fancy I am either setting up for a wit, or imagine I must write in this style to a wit; I hope you'll prove a good-natured one, and not only let me hear

[4] *i. e.* In all companies. W.

[5] In a Letter written 1774, the King of Prussia has made an observation on the manners of the French nation, which we have lived to see fully and sadly verified; "La nation Francaise, quoique tres-polie, s'est quelquefois emportée à des *Atrocités* dignes des nations les plus barbares."

from you sometimes, but forgive the small encouragement you meet with. I won't trouble myself to finish finely; a true compliment is better than a good one; and I can assure you, without any, that I am very sincerely, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER VI.

TO MR. FENTON.

SIR, May 5.

I HAD not omitted answering yours of the 18th of last month, but out of a desire to give you some certain and satisfactory account, which way, and at what time, you might take your journey. I am now commissioned to tell you, that Mr. Craggs[6] will ex-

[6] After this severe disappointment, occasioned by the death of Mr. Craggs, he brought out his tragedy of *Mariamne*, 1723, which was acted with great success at the *Lincoln's Inn Fields* Theatre, after *Cibber* had rejected it at Drury Lane, with equal insolence and ill taste. He consulted his old friend *Southerne*, on the conduct of this drama; *which*, and the *Siege of Damascus*, Mr. Walpole thinks the two last best of modern tragedies. It produced him 1000*l.* He dedicated it to Lord *Gower*, to whom he addressed one of the finest odes in our language. *Akenside* was for ever praising this ode. The *Mariamne of Voltaire* was first played, and miscarried, in 1722. These two pieces had not the least resemblance to each other. The assistance he gave to *Pope* in translating the Odyssey, published 1724, is well known. In 1725 he published an edition of *Paradise Lost*, revising and rectifying the punctuation. To which he prefixed, a short, but very elegant account of Milton's Life, and spoke of our great poet's political opinions, with a candour and liberality that does him much credit, considering they were so opposite to his own, who was a

pect you on the rising of the Parliament, which will be as soon as he can receive you in the manner he would receive a man *de belles lettres*, that is, in tranquillity and full leisure. I dare say your way of life (which, in my taste, will be the best in the world, and with one of the best men in the world) must prove highly to your contentment. And, I must add, it will be still the more a joy to me, as I shall reap a particular advantage from the good I shall have done in bringing you together[7], by seeing it in my own neighbourhood. Mr. Craggs has taken a house close

Nonjuror, and a firm friend to the *Stuart family*. And, 1719, Fenton gave to the public his last work, a magnificent edition of *Waller*, in quarto, with many notes and illustrations, of Poems, which, from their nature, being *personal*, required many. He died 1730, at Easthamstead, in the house of his friend the Lady Trumbul, whose family he had for some time superintended, and who treated him with much tenderness and attention. Mr. *Harte*, who knew many particulars of his life, once told me he would write an account of it. He had a regard for *Harte*, whose father also was a Nonjuror, a man of remarkable piety and integrity. When Judge *Jeffries* came to Taunton Assizes, 1685, to execute his commission on the rebels that had joined Monmouth; old Mr. Harte, at that time minister of St. Mary's Church at Taunton, waited on him privately, and remonstrated much against the severities which he was going to inflict. The judge listened to him calmly and attentively; and, though he had never seen him before, to his great surprize, advanced him in a few months to a Prebendal Stall in the Cathedral of Bristol. I thought the reader might not dislike to hear this anecdote of Jeffries, the one only action of his life that I believe does him any credit.

[7] Mr. Craggs had had no learned education: he wanted to improve himself in letters, and desired Mr. Pope to chuse him out a polite scholar, by whose conversation and instruction he might profit. Mr. Pope recommended Mr. Fenton; but Mr. Craggs's untimely death prevented the two latter from receiving the mutual benefits of this connexion. W.

by mine, whither he proposes to come in three weeks: in the mean time I heartily invite you to live with me; where a frugal and philosophical diet, for a time, may give you a higher relish of that elegant way of life you will enter into after. I desire to know by the first post how soon I may hope for you.

I am a little scandalized at your complaint that your time lies heavy on your hands, when the Muses have put so many good materials into your head to employ them. As to your question, What I am doing? I answer, Just what I have been doing some years, my duty; secondly, relieving myself with necessary amusements, or exercises, which shall serve me instead of physic as long as they can; thirdly, reading till I am tired; and, lastly, writing when I have no other thing in the world to do, or no friend to entertain in company.

My mother is, I thank God, the easier, if not the better, for my cares; and I am the happier in that regard, as well as in the consciousness of doing my best. My next felicity is in retaining the good opinion of honest men, who think me not quite undeserving of it; and in finding no injuries from others hurt me, as long as I know myself. I will add the sincerity with which I act towards ingenious and undesigning men, and which makes me always (even by a natural bond) their friend; therefore believe me very affectionately

Your, etc.

LETTER VII.

REV. DEAN[a] BERKELEY TO MR. POPE.

Naples, Oct. 22, N. S. 1717.

I HAVE long had it in my thoughts to trouble you with a letter, but was discouraged for want of something that I could think worth sending fifteen hundred miles. Italy is such an exhausted subject, that, I dare say, you'd easily forgive my saying nothing of it; and the imagination of a Poet is a thing so nice and delicate, that it is no easy matter to find out images capable of giving pleasure to one of the few, who (in any age) have come up to that character. I am nevertheless lately returned from an island, where I passed three or four months; which, were it set out in its true colours, might, methinks, amuse you agreeable enough for a minute or two. The island Inarime is an epitome of the whole earth, containing, within the compass of eighteen miles, a wonderful variety of hills, vales, ragged rocks, fruitful plains, and barren mountains, all thrown together in a most romantic confusion. The air is in the hottest season constantly refreshed by cool breezes from the sea. The vales produce excellent wheat and Indian corn, but are mostly covered with vineyards intermixed with fruit-trees. Besides the common kinds, as cherries, apricots, peaches, etc. they produce oranges,

[a] Afterward Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland, Author of the Dialogues of Hylas and Philonous, the Minute Philosopher, etc. W.

limes, almonds, pomegranates, figs, water-melons, and many other fruits unknown to our climates, which lie every-where open to the passenger. The hills are the greater part covered to the top with vines, some with chesnut groves, and others with thickets of myrtle and lentiscus. The fields in the northern side are divided by hedge-rows of myrtle. Several fountains and rivulets add to the beauty of this landscape, which is likewise set off by the variety of some barren spots, and naked rocks. But that which crowns the scene is a large mountain, rising out of the middle of the island (once a terrible Volcano, by the ancients called Mons Epomeus); its lower parts are adorned with vines, and other fruits; the middle affords pasture to flocks of goats and sheep, and the top is a sandy pointed rock, from which you have the finest prospect in the world, surveying, at one view, besides several pleasant islands lying at your feet, a tract of Italy about three hundred miles in length, from the promontory of Antium to the cape of Palinurus; the greater part of which hath been sung by Homer and Virgil, as making a considerable part of the travels and adventures of their two heroes. The islands Caprea, Prochyta[9], and Parthenope, together with Cajeta, Cumæ, Monte Miseno, the habitations of Circe, the Syrens, and the Læstrigones, the bay of Naples, the promontory of Minerva, and the

[9] We must lament that we have no more letters of Bp. *Berkeley;* who, we see by this before us, possessed the uncommon talent of describing *places* in the most *lively* and *graphical* manner; a talent in which he has been equalled or excelled only by Mr. *Gray,* in many of those most lively and entertaining letters published by Mr. Mason; those especially written during his travels.

whole Campagnia Felice, make but a part of this noble landscape; which would demand an imagination as warm, and numbers as flowing as your own, to describe it. The inhabitants of this delicious isle, as they are without riches and honours, so are they without the vices and follies that attend them; and were they but as much strangers to revenge, as they are to avarice and ambition, they might in fact answer the poetical notions of the golden age. But they have got, as an alloy to their happiness, an ill habit of murdering one another on slight offences. We had an instance of this the second night after our arrival, a youth of eighteen being shot dead by our door: and yet by the sole secret of minding our own business, we found a means of living securely among those dangerous people. Would you know how we pass the time at Naples? Our chief entertainment is the devotion of our neighbours: besides the gaiety of their churches (where folks go to see what they call *una bella Devozione*, i. e. a sort of religious opera) they make fireworks almost every week, out of devotion; the streets are often hung with arras, out of devotion; and (what is still more strange) the ladies invite gentlemen to their houses, and treat them with music and sweetmeats, out of devotion; in a word, were it not for this devotion of its inhabitants, Naples would have little else to recommend it, beside the air and situation. Learning is in no very thriving state here, as indeed no where else in Italy; however, among many pretenders, some men of taste are to be met with. A friend of mine told me not long since, that, being to visit Salvini at Florence, he found him

reading your Homer: he liked the notes extremely and could find no other fault with the version, but that he thought it approached too near a paraphrase; which shews him not to be sufficiently acquainted with our language. I wish you health to go on with that noble work, and when you have that, I need not wish you success. You will do me the justice to believe, that whatever relates to your welfare is sincerely wished by

Your, etc.

LETTER VIII.

MR. POPE TO THE REV. MR. BERKELEY.

DEAR SIR, Sunday.

MY Lord Bishop Atterbury was very much concerned at missing you yesterday; he desired me to engage you and myself to dine with him this day; but I was unluckily pre-engaged. And, (upon my telling him I should carry you out of town to-morrow, and hoped to keep you till the end of the week), he has desired that we will not fail to dine with him the next Sunday, when he will have no other company.

I write you this to intreat you will provide yourself of linen and other necessaries sufficient for the week; for as I take you to be almost the only friend I have, that is above the little vanities of the town, I expect you may be able to renounce it for one week, and to make trial how you like my Tusculum, because, I as-

sure you, it is no less yours, and hope you will use it as your own country villa the ensuing season.

I am yours, etc.

LETTER IX.

MR. POPE TO * * * .

December 21, 1718.

THE old project of a window in the bosom, to render the soul of man visible, is what every honest friend has manifold reason to wish for; yet even that would not do in our case, while you are so far separated from me, and so long. I begin to fear you'll die in Ireland, and that Denunciation will be fulfilled upon you, *Hibernus es, et in Hiberniam reverteris.* I should be apt to think you in Sancho's case; some Duke has made you Governor of an Island, or wet place, and you are administering laws to the wild Irish. But I must own, when you talk of Building and Planting, you touch my string; and I am as apt to pardon you, as the fellow that thought himself Jupiter would have pardoned the other madman who called himself his brother Neptune. Alas, Sir, do you know whom you talk to? one that has been a Poet, was degraded to a Translator, and, at last, through mere dulness, is turned an Architect. You know Martial's censure, *Præconem facito vel Architectum.* However, I have one way left, to plan, to elevate, and to surprise (as Bays says); the next news you may expect to hear, is that I am in debt.

The history of my Transplantation and settlement

which you desire, would require a volume, were I to enumerate the many projects, difficulties, vicissitudes, and various fates attending that important part of my life: much more, should I describe the many Draughts, Elevations, Profiles, Perspectives, etc. of every Palace and Garden proposed, intended, and happily raised, by the strength of that faculty wherein all great Genius's excel, Imagination. At last, the Gods and fate have fixed me on the borders of the Thames, in the districts of Richmond and Twickenham: it is here I have passed an intire year of my life, without any fixed abode in London, or more than casting a transitory glance (for a day or two at most in a month) on the pomps of the Town. It is here I hope to receive you, Sir, returned from eternizing the Ireland of this age. For you my structures rise; for you my Colonades extend their wings; for you my groves aspire, and roses bloom. And, to say truth, I hope posterity (which, no doubt, will be made acquainted with all these things) will look upon it as one of the principal motives of my Architecture, that it was a mansion prepared to receive you, against your own should fall to dust, which is destined to be the tomb of poor Frank and Betty, and the immortal monument of the Fidelity of two such Servants, who have excelled in constancy the very Rats of your family.

What more can I tell you of myself? so much, and yet all put together so little, that I scarce care or know how to do it. But the very reasons that are against putting it upon paper, are as strong for telling it you in person; and I am uneasy to be so long denied the satisfaction of it.

At present I consider you bound in by the Irish sea, like the ghosts in Virgil,

> Tristi palus inamabilis unda
> Alligat, et novies Styx circumfusa coercet!

and I can't express how I long to renew our old intercourse and conversation, our morning conferences in bed in the same room, our evening walks in the park, our amusing voyages on the water, our philosophical suppers, our lectures, our dissertations, our gravities, our reveries, our fooleries, or what not?—This awakens the memory of some of those who have made a part in all these. Poor Parnelle, Garth, Rowe! You justly reprove me for not speaking of the death of the last: Parnelle was too much in my mind, to whose memory I am erecting the best monument I can. What he gave me to publish, was but a small part of what he left behind him; but it was the best, and I will not make it worse by enlarging it. I'd fain know if he be buried at Chester, or Dublin; and what care has been, or is to be taken for his monument, etc. Yet I have not neglected my devoirs to Mr. Rowe; I am writing this very day his Epitaph for Westminster-Abbey.—After these, the best-natured of Men, Sir Samuel Garth, has left me in the truest concern for his loss. His death was very heroical, and yet unaffected enough to have made a saint or a Philosopher famous. But ill tongues, and worse hearts have branded even his last moments, as wrongfully as they did his life, with Irreligion. You must have heard many tales on this subject; but if

ever there was a good Christian without knowing himself to be so[1], it was Dr. Garth.

Your, etc.

LETTER X.

TO MR. * * * *

September 17.

THE gaiety of your letter proves you not so studious of Wealth as many of your profession are, since you can derive matter of mirth from want of business. You are none of those Lawyers who deserve the motto of the devil, *Circuit quærens quem devoret.* But your *Circuit* will at least procure you one of the greatest temporal blessings, Health. What an advantageous circumstance is it, for one that loves rambling so well, to be a grave and reputable rambler! while (like your fellow Circuiteer, the Sun) you travel the round of the earth, and behold all the iniquities under the heavens! You are much a superior genius to me in rambling: you, like a Pigeon, (to which I would sooner compare a Lawyer than to a Hawk,) can fly some hundred leagues at a pitch: I, like a poor squirrel, am continually in motion indeed, but it is about a cage of three foot;

[1] This supposes rather an absolute *ignorance* of Christianity than a *rejection* of it; and seems to be the more inexcusable condition of the two. For nothing but a very faulty negligence could be the occasion of the first; whereas, an understanding ill fitted to judge of the nature of evidence, might betray him into the latter. W.

my little excursions are but like those of a shopkeeper, who walks every day a mile or two before his own door, but minds his business all the while. Your letter of the Cause lately before you, I could not but communicate to some ladies of your acquaintance. I am of opinion, if you continued a correspondence of the same sort during a whole Circuit, it could not fail to please the sex, better than half the novels they read; there would be in them what they love above all things, a most happy union of Truth and Scandal. I assure you the Bath affords nothing equal to it: it is on the contrary full of *grave and sad* men, Mr. Baron S. Lord Chief Justice A. Judge P. and Counsellor B. who has a large pimple on the tip of his nose, but thinks it inconsistent with his gravity to wear a patch, notwithstanding the precedent of an eminent judge.

I am, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XI.

TO THE EARL OF BURLINGTON.

My Lord,

If your Mare could speak[2], she would give an account of what extraordinary company she had on the road; which since she cannot do, I will.

[2] The account of this journey is given with the most exquisite humour. I know of nothing in our language that equals it, except, perhaps, Mr. Colman's description, in a *Terræ Filius*, of an expedition of his bookseller and his wife to Oxford.

It was the enterprising Mr. Lintot, the redoubtable rival of Mr. Tonson, who, mounted on a stone-horse, (no disagreeable companion to your Lordship's mare,) overtook me in Windsor-forest. He said, he heard I designed for Oxford, the seat of the Muses, and would, as my bookseller, by all means, accompany me thither.

I asked him where he got his horse? He answered he got it of his Publisher: "For that rogue my Printer (said he) disappointed me: I hoped to put him in a good humour by a treat at the tavern, of a brown fricassee of rabbits, which cost two shillings, with two quarts of wine, besides my conversation. I thought myself cock-sure of his horse, which he readily promised me, but said that Mr. Tonson had just such another design of going to Cambridge, expecting there the copy of a new kind of Horace from Dr. ——, and if Mr. Tonson went, he was pre-engaged to attend him, being to have the printing of the said copy.

"So in short, I borrowed this stonehorse of my Publisher, which he had of Mr. Oldmixon for a debt; he lent me too the pretty boy you see after me: he was a smutty dog yesterday, and cost me near two hours to wash the ink off his face; but the Devil is a fair-conditioned Devil, and very forward in his catechise: if you have any more bags, he shall carry them."

I thought Mr. Lintot's civility not to be neglected, so gave the boy a small bag, containing three shirts and an Elzevir Virgil; and mounting in an instant proceeded on the road, with my man before, my

courteous stationer beside, and the aforesaid devil behind.

Mr. Lintot began in this manner. "Now damn them! what if they should put it into the newspaper, how you and I went together to Oxford? what would I care? If I should go down into Sussex, they would say I was gone to the Speaker. But what of that? If my son were but big enough to go on with the business, by G—d I would keep as good company as old Jacob."

Hereupon I enquired of his son. "The lad (says he) has fine parts, but is somewhat sickly, much as you are.—I spare for nothing in his Education at Westminster. Pray, don't you think Westminster to be the best school in England? most of the late Ministry came out of it, so did many of this Ministry. I hope the boy will make his fortune."

Don't you design to let him pass a year at Oxford? "To what purpose? (said he) the Universities do but make Pedants, and I intend to breed him a man of business."

As Mr. Lintot was talking, I observed he sat uneasy on his saddle, for which I expressed some solicitude: Nothing, says he, I can bear it well enough; but since we have the day before us, methinks it would be very pleasant for you to rest awhile under the woods. When we were alighted, "See here, what a mighty pretty Horace I have in my pocket! what if you amused yourself in turning an ode, till we mount again? Lord! if you pleased, what a clever Miscellany might you make at leisure hours?" Perhaps I may, said I, if we ride on; the motion is

an aid to my fancy, a round trot very much awakens my spirits; then jog on apace, and I'll think as hard as I can.

Silence ensued for a full hour; after which Mr. Lintot lugged the reins, stopped short and broke out, "Well, Sir, how far have you gone?" I answered, Seven miles. "Z——ds, Sir, said Lintot, I thought you had done seven stanzas. Oldsworth, in a ramble round Wimbleton-hill, would translate a whole ode in half this time. I'll say that for Oldsworth (though I lost by his Timothy's), he translates an ode of Horace the quickest of any man in England. I remember Dr. King[3] would write verses in a tavern three hours after he could not speak: and there's Sir Richard, in that rumbling old chariot of his, between Fleet-ditch and St. Giles's pound, shall make you half a Job."

Pray, Mr. Lintot, (said I,) now you talk of Translators, what is your method of managing them? "Sir, (replied he,) those are the saddest pack of rogues in the world: in a hungry fit they'll swear they understand all the languages in the universe: I have known one of them take down a Greek book upon my counter, and cry, Ah, this is Hebrew, I must read it from the latter end. By G—d I can never be sure in these fellows, for I neither understand Greek, Latin, French, nor Italian myself. But this is my way; I agree with them for ten shillings per sheet, with a proviso, that I will have their doings corrected by whom I please; so by one or

[3] Of the Commons, Author of the Art of Cookery and other forgotten Poetry.

other they are led at last to the true sense of an author; my judgment giving the negative to all my translators." But how are you secure those correctors may not impose upon you? "Why I get any civil gentleman (especially any Scotchman) that comes into my shop, to read the original to me in English; by this I know whether my first translator be deficient, and whether my corrector merits his money or not.

"I'll tell you what happened to me last month: I bargained with S* for a new version of Lucretius to publish against Tonson's; agreeing to pay the author so many shillings at his producing so many lines. He made a great progress in a very short time, and I gave it to the correcter to compare with the Latin; but he went directly to Creech's translation, and found it the same word for word, all but the first page. Now, what d'ye think I did? I arrested the translator for a cheat; nay, and I stopt the corrector's pay too, upon this proof that he had made use of Creech instead of the original."

Pray tell me next how you deal with the Critics? "Sir, said he, nothing more easy. I can silence the most formidable of them: the rich ones for a sheet apiece of the blotted manuscript, which cost me nothing; they'll go about with it to their acquaintance, and pretend they had it from the author, who submitted to their correction: this has given some of them such an air, that in time they come to be consulted with, and dedicated to, as the top Critics of the town.——As for the poor Critics, I'll give you one instance of my management, by which you may

guess at the rest: A lean man, that looked like a very good scholar, came to me t'other day; he turned over your Homer, shook his head, shrug'd up his shoulders, and pish'd at every line of it: One would wonder (says he) at the strange presumption of some men; Homer is no such easy task, that every stripling, every versifier—He was going on, when my wife called to dinner: Sir, said I, will you please to eat a piece of beef with me? Mr. Lintot, said he, I am sorry you should be at the expense of this great book, I am really concerned on your account—Sir, I am much obliged to you: if you can dine upon a piece of beef, togehter with a slice of pudding—Mr. Lintot, I do not say but Mr. Pope, if he would condescend to advise with men of learning—Sir, the pudding is upon the table, if you please to go in—My Critic complies, he comes to a taste of your poetry, and tells me in the same breath, that the book is commendable, and the pudding excellent.

"Now, Sir, (concluded Mr. Lintot,) in return to the frankness I have shewn, pray tell me, Is it the opinion of your friends at court that my Lord Lansdown will be brought to the bar or not?" I told him I heard he would not, and I hoped it, my Lord being one I had particular obligations to. "That may be, (replied Mr. Lintot,) but by G—d if he is not, I shall lose the printing of a very good Trial."

These, my Lord, are a few traits by which you discern the genius of Mr. Lintot, which I have chosen for the subject of a letter. I dropt him as soon as I got to Oxford, and paid a visit to my Lord Carleton at Middleton.

The conversations I enjoy here are not to be prejudiced by my pen, and the pleasures from them only to be equalled when I meet your Lordship. I hope in a few days to cast myself from your horse at your feet.

I am, etc.

LETTER XII.

TO THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

[In answer to a Letter in which he enclosed the Description of Buckingham-House, written by him to the D. of Sh.]

PLINY was one of those few authors who had a warm house over his head, nay two houses, as appears by two of his epistles. I believe, if any of his contemporary authors durst have informed the public where they lodged, we should have found the garrets of Rome as well inhabited, as those of Fleet-street: but it is dangerous to let creditors into such a secret; therefore we may presume that then, as well as now-a-days, nobody knew where they lived but their booksellers.

It seems that when Virgil came to Rome, he had no lodging at all[4]: he first introduced himself to Au-

[4] But Virgil, afterward, possessed a fine house at Rome, and a villa at Naples. And Horace, says Swift, I am sure kept his coach. Lucan and Silius Italicus dwelt in marble palaces, and had their gardens adorned with the most exquisite statues of Greece. Of modern poets, Trissino and Voltaire seem to have had the most superb houses. The former, who was a skilful architect, as well as poet, was rich enough to build a palace from

gustus by an epigram, beginning *Nocte pluit tota*—— an observation which probably he had not made, unless he had lain all night in the street.

Where Juvenal lived we cannot affirm; but in one of his satires he complains of the excessive price of lodgings; neither do I believe he would have talked so feelingly of Codrus's bed, if there had been room for a bedfellow in it.

I believe, with all the ostentation of Pliny, he would have been glad to have changed both his houses for your Grace's one; which is a country house in the summer, and a town-house in the winter, and must be owned to be the properest habitation for a wise man, who sees all the world change every season without ever changing himself.

I have been reading the description of Pliny's house with an eye to yours, but, finding they will bear no comparison, will try if it can be matched by the large country-seat I inhabit at present, and see what figure it may make by the help of a florid description.

You must expect nothing regular in my description, any more than in the house; the whole vast edifice is so disjointed, and the several parts of it so de-

a design of his own, under the direction of the celebrated Palladio. And the chateau of Voltaire, at Ferney, has been visited by so many Englishmen, as to render a description of it superfluous. Mr. Harte related to me, that Pope, in one of their usual walks together, desired him to go with him to a house in the Hay-market, where he would shew him a curiosity. On being admitted by an old woman who kept a little shop, and going up three pair of stairs into a small room; "In this garret," said Pope, "Addison wrote his Campaign."

tached one from the other, and yet so joining again, one cannot tell how, that, in one of my poetical fits, I imagined it had been a village in Amphion's time, where the cottages having taken a country dance together, had been all out, and stood stone-still with amazement ever since.

You must excuse me, if I say nothing of the front; indeed I don't know which it is. A stranger would be grievously disappointed, who endeavoured to get into this house the right way. One would reasonably expect after the entry through the porch to be let into the hall: alas! nothing less! you find yourself in the house of office. From the parlour you think to step into the drawing-room, but upon opening the iron-nailed door, you are convinced by a flight of birds about your ears, and a cloud of dust in your eyes, that it is the pigeon house. If you come into the chapel, you find its altars, like those of the ancients, continually smoaking, but it is with the steams of the adjoining kitchen.

The great hall within is high and spacious, flanked on one side with a very long table, a true image of ancient hospitality: the walls are all over ornamented with monstrous horns of animals, about twenty broken pikes, ten or a dozen blunderbusses, and a rusty matchlock musquet or two, which we were informed had served in the civil wars. Here is one vast arched window[5] beautifully darkened with divers scutcheons of painted glass: one shining pane in particular bears

[5] This letter contains a most lively and picturesque account of an old Gothic seat or castle. All true Poets have a taste for antiquities.

date 1286, which alone preserves the memory of a Knight whose iron armour is long since perished with rust, and whose alabaster nose is mouldered from his monument. The face of dame Eleanor in another piece owes more to that single pane than to all the glasses she ever consulted in her life. After this, who can say that glass is frail, when it is not half so frail as human beauty, or glory? and yet I can't but sigh to think that the most authentic record of so ancient a family should lie at the mercy of every infant who flings a stone. In former days there have dined in this hall gartered Knights, and courtly Dames, attended by ushers, sewers, and seneschals; and yet it was but last night, that an owl flew hither, and mistook it for a barn.

This hall lets you (up and down) over a very high threshold into the great parlour. Its contents are a broken-bellied virginal, a couple of crippled velvet chairs, with two or three mildewed pictures of mouldy ancestors, who look as dismally as if they came fresh from hell with all their brimstone about them; these are carefully set at the further corner, for the windows being every where broken, make it so convenient a place to dry poppies and mustard seed, that the room is appropriated to that use.

In Britain's Isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands:
The Huntingdons, and Hattons there
Employ'd the power of Fairy Hands.

To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each pannel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing. GRAY.

Next this parlour, as I said before, lies the pigeon-house, by the side of which runs an entry, which lets you on one hand and t'other into a bed-chamber, a buttery, and a small hole called the chaplain's study: then follow a brew-house, a little green and gilt parlour, and the great stairs, under which is the dairy; a little further on the right the servants hall, and by the side of it up six steps, the old lady's closet for her private devotions; which has a lettice into the hall, intended (as we imagine) that at the same time as she prayed, she might have an eye on the men and maids. There are upon the ground floor in all twenty-six apartments, among which I must not forget a chamber which has in it a large antiquity of timber, that seems to have been either a bedstead, or a cyder-press.

The kitchen is built in form of the Rotunda, being one vast vault to the top of the house; where one aperture serves to let out the smoke, and let in the light. By the blackness of the walls, the circular fires, vast cauldrons, yawning mouths of ovens and furnaces, you would think it either the forge of Vulcan, the cave of Polypheme, or the temple of Moloch. The horror of this place has made such an impression on the country people, that they believe the Witches keep their sabbath here, and that once a year the Devil treats them with infernal venison, a roasted tiger stuffed with ten-penny nails.

Above stairs we have a number of rooms: you never pass out of one into another but by the ascent or descent of two or three stairs. Our best room is very long and low, of the exact proportion of a Band-

box. In most of these rooms there are hangings of the finest work in the world, that is to say, those which Arachne spins from her own bowels. Were it not for this only furniture, the whole would be a miserable scene of naked walls, flawed ceilings, broken windows, and rusty locks. The roof is so decayed, that after a favourable shower we may expect a crop of mushrooms between the chinks of our floors. All the doors are as little and low as those to the cabins of Packet-boats. These rooms have for many years had no other inhabitants than certain rats, whose very age renders them worthy of this Seat, for the very rats of this venerable house are grey: since these have not yet quitted it, we hope at least that this ancient mansion may not fall during the small remnant these poor animals have to live, who are now too infirm to remove to another. There is yet a small subsistence left them in the few remaining books of the Library.

We had never seen half what I have described, but for a starched grey-headed Steward[6], who is as much an antiquity as any in this place, and looks like an old family picture walked out of its frame. He entertained us as we passed from room to room with several relations of the family; but his observations were particularly curious when he came to the cellar: he informed us where stood the triple rows of butts of sack, and where were ranged the bottles of tent, for toasts in a morning; he pointed to the stands that supported the iron-hooped hogsheads of

[6] Old *Vellum;* so naturally painted by Addison; who, in truth, always painted naturally.

strong beer; then stepping to a corner, he lugged out the tattered fragments of an unframed picture: "This (says he, with tears) was poor Sir Thomas! once master[7] of all this drink. He had two sons, poor young masters! who never arrived to the age of his beer; they both fell ill in this very room, and never went out on their own legs." He could not pass by a heap of broken bottles without taking up a piece, to shew us the Arms of the family upon it. He then led us up the Tower by dark winding stone steps, which landed us into several little rooms one above another. One of these was nailed up, and our guide whispered to us as a secret the occasion of it: it seems the course of this noble blood was a little interrupted about two centuries ago, by a freak of the Lady Frances, who was here taken in the fact with a neighbouring Prior, ever since which the room has been nailed up, and branded with the name of the Adultery-chamber. The ghost of Lady Frances is supposed to walk there, and some prying maids of the family report that they have seen a lady in a fardingale through the key-hole; but this matter is hushed up, and the servants are forbid to talk of it.

I must needs have tired you by this long description: but what engaged me in it, was a generous principle to preserve the memory of that, which itself must soon fall into dust, nay perhaps part of it before this letter reaches your hands.

Indeed we owe this old house the same kind of

[7] Not master of this mansion, but of all this *drink!* The stone steps, and the haunted chamber, and arms on the bottles, are admirable.

gratitude that we do to an old friend, who harbours us in his declining condition, nay even in his last extremities. How fit is this retreat for uninterrupted study, where no one that passes by can dream there is an inhabitant, and even those who would dine with us dare not stay under our roof! Any one that sees it will own I could not have chosen a more likely place to converse with the dead in. I had been mad indeed if I had left your Grace for any thing but Homer. But when I return to the living, I shall have the sense to endeavour to converse with the best of them, and shall therefore as soon as possible tell you in person how much I am, etc.

LETTER XIII.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM TO MR. POPE.

You desire my opinion as to the late dispute in France concerning Homer[8]: and I think it excusable

[8] The mildness, civility, and politeness, with which La Motte wrote against the opinions of Mad. D'Acier, make his Discourse on Homer a model of controversy. The lady replied to him with acrimony and vehemence. If he had insinuated that she had wrinkles, or that she had weakened her eyes by poring over *Aldus's Aristophanes*, she could not have been more exasperated. La Motte, not understanding Greek, was certainly an incompetent judge; and his chief objections arise from the *manners* of Homer not being like the *French* manners. The prose of La Motte is far superior to his verse. His *Abridgment of Homer* is imperfect and uninteresting. He was one of the chief combatants in the great controversy concerning the respective merits of the ancients and moderns. He was honoured with the friend-

(at an age, alas! of not much pleasure) to amuse myself a little in taking notice of a controversy, than which nothing is at present more remarkable, (even in a nation who value themselves so much upon the Belles Lettres,) both on account of the illustrious subject of it, and of the two persons engaged in the quarrel.

The one is extraordinary in all the Lyric kind of Poetry, even in the opinion of his very adversary. The other a lady (and of more value for being so) not only of great Learning, but with a Genius admirably turned to that sort of it which most becomes her Sex for softness, gentleness, and promoting of virtue; and such as (one would think) is not so liable as other parts of scholarship, to rough disputes, or violent animosity.

Yet it has so happened, that no writers, even about Divinity itself, have been more outrageous or uncharitable than these two polite authors; by suffering their judgments to be a little warped (if I may use that expression) by the heat of their eager inclinations,

ship of Fenelon; whose letters to him abound in good sterling judgment, and exquisite taste; particularly one, in which Fenelon makes objections to rhyme, that appear unanswerable. "La rime gêne plus qu'elle n'orne les vers. Elle les charge d'epithétes; elle rend souvent la diction forcée, et pleine d'une vaine parure; en allongant les discours, elle les affoiblit. Souvent on a recours à un vers inutile, pour en amener un bon." La Motte was so great an enemy to rhyme, that he addressed an Ode to Cardinal Fleury, in blank verse; in which measure also he wrote the Tragedy of Œdipus, and defended his practice in a spirited preface against some strong objections of Voltaire. His other tragedies in rhyme were, Romulus, the Maccabees, and Ines de Castro; a story on which the Elvira of Mallet is founded.

to attack or defend so great an Author under debate. I wish for the sake of the public, which is now so well entertained by their quarrel, it may not end at last in their agreeing to blame a third man who is so presumptuous as to censure both, if they should chance to hear of it.

To begin with matter of fact. M. D'Acier has well judged, that the best of all Poets certainly deserved a better translation, at least into French prose, because to see it done in verse was despaired of: I believe indeed, from a defect in that language, incapable of mounting to any degree of excellence suitable to so very great an undertaking.

She has not only performed this task as well as prose can do it (which is indeed but as the wrong side of tapestry is able to represent the right[9]), she has added to it also many learned and useful annotations. With all which she most obligingly delighted not only her own sex, but most of ours, ignorant of the Greek, and consequently her adversary himself, who frankly acknowledges that ignorance.

'Tis no wonder therefore, if, in doing this, she is grown so enamoured of that unspeakably-charming Author, as to have a kind of horror at the least mention of a man bold enough to blame him.

Now as to M. de la Motte, he being already deservedly famous for all sorts of Lyric Poetry, was so far introduced by her into those beauties of the Epic kind (though but in that way of translation) as not to

[9] A thought of Cervantes, borrowed with the freedom of a Lord. W.

resist the pleasure and hope of reputation, by attempting that in verse, which had been applauded so much for the difficulty of doing it even in prose; knowing how this, well executed, must extremely transcend the other.

But, as great Poets are a little apt to think they have an ancient right of being excused for vanity on all occasions, he was not content to out-do M. D'Acier, but endeavoured to out-do Homer himself, and all that ever in any age or nation went before him in the same enterprize; by leaving out, altering, or adding whatever he thought best.

Against this presumptuous attempt, Homer has been in all times so well defended, as not to need my small assistance; yet, I must needs say, his excellencies are such, that for their sakes he deserves a much gentler touch for his seeming errors. These if M. de la Motte had translated as well as the rest, with an apology for having retained them only out of mere veneration; his judgment, in my opinion, would have appeared much greater than by the best of his alterations, though I admit them to be written very finely. I join with M. de la Motte in wondering at some odd things in Homer, but it is chiefly because of his sublime one, I was about to say his divine ones, which almost surprize me at finding them any where in the fallible condition of human nature.

And now we are wondering, I am in a difficulty to guess what can be the reason of these exceptions against Homer, from one who has himself translated him, contrary to the general custom of translators.

Is there not a little of that in it? I mean to be singular, in getting above the title of a Translator, though sufficiently honourable in this case. For such an ambition nobody has less occasion, than one who is so fine a Poet in other kinds: and who must have too much wit to believe, any alteration of another can entitle him to the denomination of an *Epic Poet* himself: though no man in this age seems more capable of being a good one, if the French tongue would bear it. Yet in his translation he has done too well, to leave any doubt (with all his faults) that her's can be ever paralleled with it.

Besides, he could not be ignorant that finding faults is the most easy and vulgar part of a critic; whereas nothing shows so much skill and taste both, as the being thoroughly sensible of the sublimest excellencies.

What can we say in excuse of all this? *Humanum est errare:* since as good a Poet as, I believe, the French language is capable of, and as sharp a Critic as any nation can produce, has, by too much censuring Homer, subjected a translation to censure, that would have otherwise stood the test[1] of the severest adversary.

But since he would needs chuse that wrong way of criticism, I wonder he missed a stone so easy to be thrown against Homer, not for his filling the Iliad with so much slaughter, (for that is to be excused, since a war is not capable of being described without it,) but with so many various particulars of wounds

[1] It is impossible and absurd to assent to this encomium on the *Frenchified* Homer of La Motte.

and horror, as shew the writer (I am afraid) so delighted that way himself[2], as not the least to doubt his reader being so also. Like Spanioletta, whose dismal pictures are the more disagreeable for being always so very movingly painted. Even Hector's last parting from his son and Andromache hardly makes us amends for his body's being dragged thrice round the town. M. de la Motte, in his strongest objection about that dismal combat, has sufficient cause to blame his enraged adversary; who here gives an instance that it is impossible to be violent without committing some mistake; her passion for Homer blinding her too much to perceive the very grossest of his failings. By which warning I am become a little more capable of impartiality, though in a dispute about that very Poet for whom I have the greatest veneration.

M. D'Acier[3] might have considered a little, that whatever were the motives of M. de la Motte to so

[2] An insufferable calumny against our divine old Bard. There are more strokes of humanity than cruelty in the Iliad, notwithstanding these passages hinted at. The interview of Priam with Achilles, when he comes to beg the body of his son, is, in my apprehension, the finest description in any poet, ancient or modern, whatever.

[3] Menage wrote this Greek Distich on her celebrated translation.

Ἰλιὰς ἣδ' Ἄννης Δακηρίδος, ἣ μάλα δήτοι
Νῦν Πηληϊάδεω μῆνιν ἄεισε θεά.

But the Abbe Cartaud, in his Essay on Taste, has given a ridiculous representation of this learned Lady, in the act of reciting the parting scene of Hector and Andromache. And adds, that it were to be wished that she had confined her occupations to such as employed the mind and hands of the amiable wife of Hector.

bold a proceeding, it could not darken that fame which I am sure she thinks shines securely even after the vain attempts of Plato himself against it: caused only perhaps by a like reason with that of Madam D'Acier's anger against M. de la Motte, namely, the finding that in prose his genius (great as it was) could not be capable of the sublime heights of poetry, which therefore he banished out of his commonwealth.

Nor were these objections to Homer any more lessening her merit in translating him as well as that way is capable of, viz. fully, plainly, and elegantly, than the most admirable verses can be any disparagement to as excellent prose.

The best excuse for all this violence is, its being in a cause which gives a kind of reputation even to suffering, notwithstanding ever so ill a management of it.

The worst of defending even Homer in such a passionate manner, is its being more a proof of her weakness, than of his being liable to none. For what is it can excuse Homer any more than Hector, for flying at the first sight of Achilles? whose terrible aspect sure needed not such an inexcusable fright to set it off; and methinks all that account of Minerva's restoring his dart to Achilles, comes a little too late, for excusing Hector's so terrible apprehension at the very first.

LETTER XIV.

TO THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

September 1, 1718.

I AM much honoured by your Grace's compliance with my request, in giving me your opinion of the French dispute concerning Homer. And I shall keep my word, in fairly telling wherein I disagree from you. It is but in two or three very small points, not so much of the dispute, as of the parties concerned in it. I cannot think quite so highly of the Lady's learning, though I respect it very much. It is great complaisance in that polite nation, to allow her to be a Critic of equal rank with her husband. To instance no further, his remarks on Horace shew more good Sense, Penetration, and a better Taste of his author, and those upon Aristotle's Art of Poetry more Skill and Science, than any of her's or any author whatever[4]. In truth, they are much more slight, dwell more in generals, and are, besides, for the most part less her own; of which her Remarks upon Homer are an example, where Eustathius is transcribed ten times for once that he is quoted. Nor is there at all more depth of learning in those upon Terence, Plautus, or (where they were most wanted) upon Aristophanes, only the Greek scholia upon the latter are some of the best extant.

[4] This is a just character of that excellent Critic's writings; who seems not to have justice done him, either at home or abroad. W.

Your Grace will believe me, that I did not search to find defects in a Lady; my employment upon the Iliad forced me to see them; yet I have had so much of the French complaisance as to conceal her thefts; for wherever I have found her notes to be wholly another's (which is the case in some hundreds) I have barely quoted the true Proprietor without observing upon it. If Madam D'Acier has ever seen my observations, she will be sensible of this conduct, but what effect it may have upon a lady, I will not answer for.

In the next place, as to M. de la Motte, I think your Grace hardly does him right, in supposing he could have no Idea of the beauties of Homer's Epic Poetry, but what he learned from Madam D'Acier's Prose-translation. There had been a very elegant Prose-translation before, that of Monsieur de la Valterie[5]; so elegant, that the style of it was evidently the original and model of the famous Telemaque[6].

[5] To which translation Pope himself was not a little obliged.

[6] That vain and haughty despot, Louis XIV. would never forgive Fenelon for the many sarcasms scattered up and down in his Telemachus, on pride, profusion, luxury, and arbitrary power. For these, much more than for the "Maxims of the Saints," was this virtuous and exemplary prelate banished from the court to his diocess. And Cardinal Fleury would not suffer Louis XV. to read Telemachus. As to La Motte, in addition to what has been said of his Odes being more philosophical than poetical, it may also be observed, that so were his Fables. In the latter also were introduced too many new and improper personifications; and Dom Jugement, Dame Memoire, and Demoiselle Imagination, Talent, and Reputation, seem to be strange actors in a fable. See Fable XIII. His Discourses on Fable, on Lyric Poetry, and on Homer (though so vehemently proscribed by Mad. D'Acier), contain many acute and original remarks. The cheerfulness and equa-

Your Grace very justly animadverts against the too great disposition of finding faults, in the one, and of confessing none in the other: but doubtless as to violence, the lady has infinitely the better of the gentleman. Nothing can be more polite, dispassionate, or sensible, than M. de la Motte's manner of managing the dispute: and so much as I see your Grace admires the beauty of his verse, (in which you have the suffrage too of the Archbishop of Cambray), I will venture to say, his prose is full as good. I think therefore when you say, no disputants even in Divinity could be more outrageous and uncharitable than these two authors, you are a little too hard upon M. de la Motte. Not but that (with your Grace) I doubt as little of the zeal of Commentators as of the zeal of Divines, and am as ready to believe of the passions and pride of mankind in general, that (did but the same interests go along with them) they would carry the learned world to as violent extremes, animosities, and even persecutions, about variety of opinions in Criticism, as ever they did about Religion: and that, in defect of Scripture to quarrel upon, we should have the French, Italian, and Dutch Commentators ready to burn one another[7] about Homer, Virgil, Terence, and Horace.

nimity with which he endured the calamity of blindness, for many years, does him more real honour than could be acquired by the best compositions of prose or verse. To the same good temper may be ascribed his cordial reconciliation with Mad. D'Acier, after their severe combat, to whom he addressed an Ode full of delicate compliments.

[7] There cannot be a juster ridicule on the violence and absurdity of controversial divines.

I do not wonder your Grace is shocked at the flight of Hector upon the first appearance of Achilles in the twenty-second Iliad. However (to shew myself a true Commentator, if not a true Critic) I will endeavour to excuse, if not to defend it in my Notes on that book. And to save myself what trouble I can, instead of doing it in this letter, I will draw up the substance of what I have to say for it in a separate paper, which I will shew your Grace when next we meet. I will only desire you to allow me, that Hector was in an absolute certainty of death, and depressed over and above with the conscience of being in an ill cause. If your heart be so great, as not to grant the first of these will sink the spirit of a Hero, you'll at least be so good, as to allow the second may. But, I can tell your Grace, no less a Hero than my Lord Peterborow, when a person complimented him for never being afraid, made this answer: "Sir, shew me a danger that I think an imminent and real one, and I promise you I'll be as much afraid as any of you."

I am your Grace's, etc.

LETTER XV.

FROM DR. ARBUTHNOT.

London, Sep. 7, 1714.

I AM extremely obliged to you for taking notice of a poor old distressed courtier, commonly the most despicable thing in the world. This blow has so roused

Scriblerus that he has recovered his senses, and thinks and talks like other men. From being frolicksome and gay he is turned grave and morose. His lucubrations lie neglected among old news-papers, cases, petitions, and abundance of unanswerable letters. I wish to God they had been among the papers of a noble Lord sealed up. Then might Scriblerus have passed for the Pretender, and it would have been a most excellent and laborious work for the Flying Post, or some such author, to have allegorized all his adventures into a plot, and found out mysteries somewhat like the Key to the Lock. Martin's office is now the second door on the left hand in Dover-street, where he will be glad to see Dr. Parnelle, Mr. Pope, and his old friends, to whom he can still afford a half pint of claret. It is with some pleasure that he contemplates the world still busy, and all mankind at work for him. I have seen a letter from Dean Swift; he keeps up his noble spirit, and though like a man knocked down, you may behold him still with a stern countenance, and aiming a blow at his adversaries. I will add no more, being in haste, only that I will never forgive you if you can't use my aforesaid house in Dover-street with the same freedom as you did that in St. James's; for as our friendship was not begun upon the relation of a courtier, so I hope it will not end with it. I will always be proud to be reckoned amongst the number of your friends and humble servants.

LETTER XVI.

TO DR. ARBUTHNOT.

September 10.

I AM glad your travels delighted you; improve you, I am sure, they could not; you are not so much a youth as that, though you run about with a King of sixteen, and, (what makes him still more a child) a King of Frenchmen. My own time has been more melancholy, spent in attendance upon death, which has seized one of our family: my mother is something better, though at her advanced age every day is a climacteric. There was joined to this an indisposition of my own, which I ought to look upon as a slight one compared with my mother's, because my life is not of half the consequence to any body that her's is to me. All these incidents have hindered my more speedy reply to your obliging letter.

The article you enquire of, is of as little concern to me as you desire it should; namely the railing papers about the Odyssey. If the book has merit, it will extinguish all such nasty scandal; as the Sun puts an end to stinks, merely by coming out.

I wish I had nothing to trouble me more; an honest mind is not in the power of any dishonest one. To break its peace, there must be some guilt or consciousness, which is inconsistent with its own principles. Not but malice and injustice have their day, like some poor short-lived vermin that die in shooting

their own stings. Falsehood is Folly (says Homer), and liars and culumniators at last hurt none but themselves, even in this world: in the next, 'tis charity to say, God have mercy on them! they were the devil's vicegerents upon earth, who is the father of lies, and, I fear, has a right to dispose of his children.

I have had occasion to make these reflections of late more justly than from any thing that concerns my writings, for it is one that concerns my morals, and (which I ought to be as tender of as my own) the good character of another very innocent person, who I am sure shares your friendship no less than I do. No creature has better natural dispositions, or would act more right or reasonably in every duty, did she act by herself, or from herself; but you know it is the misfortune of that family to be governed like a ship, I mean the Head guided by the Tail, and that by every wind that blows in it.

LETTER XVII.

MR. POPE TO THE EARL OF OXFORD[6].

My Lord, October 21, 1721.

Your Lordship may be surprized at the liberty I take in writing to you; though you will allow me al-

[6] If he had not been released from his imprisonment in the Tower, and had been brought to a trial, he would have produced strong and undeniable proofs, that many of his persecutors, particularly the D. of M——h, were engaged in intrigues with the

ways to remember, that you once permitted me that honour in conjunction with some others who better deserved it. I hope you will not wonder I am still desirous to have you think me your grateful and faithful servant; but I own, I have an ambition yet farther, to have others think me so, which is the occasion I give your Lordship the trouble of this. P Parnelle, before he died, left me the charge of p lishing these few remains of his: I have a strong sire to make them, their author, and their publish more considerable, by addressing and dedicating th all to you. There is a pleasure in bearing testimo to truth, and a vanity perhaps, which at least is excusable as any vanity can be. I beg you, my Lord, to allow me to gratify it in prefixing this paper of honest verses to the book. I send the book itself, which I dare say you'll receive more satisfaction in perusing, than you can from any thing written upon the subject of yourself. Therefore I am a good deal in doubt whether you will care for such an addition to it. All I shall say for it is, that it is the only dedication I ever writ, and shall be the only one, whether you accept of it or not: for I will not bow the knee to a less man than my Lord Oxford, and I expect to see no greater in my time[9].

Pretender and his party. His friends had in their custody a letter that irrefragably would have proved this fact, which they shewed to the Dutchess. Lord Oxford was released soon after this letter had been shewn to her.

[9] *Bolingbroke* had a very different, and indeed unjust, opinion of Lord *Oxford*, whom he calls, "a man of whom Nature meant to make a *spy*, or, at most, a captain of *miners*; and whom Fortune, in one of her whimsical moods, made a *General*." This

After all, if your Lordship will tell my Lord Harley that I must not do this, you may depend upon a suppression of these verses (the only copy whereof I send you); but you never shall suppress that great, sincere, and entire respect, with which I am always,

My Lord,

Your, etc.

LETTER XVIII.

THE EARL OF OXFORD TO MR. POPE.

SIR, Brampton-Castle, Nov. 6, 1721.

I RECEIVED your packet, which could not but give me great pleasure, to see you preserve an old friend in your memory; for it must needs be very agreeable to be remembered by those we highly value. But then how much shame did it cause me, when I read your very fine verses enclosed? My mind reproached me how far short I came of what your great friendship and delicate pen would partially describe me. You ask my consent to publish it: to what straits doth this reduce me? I look back indeed to those evenings I have usefully and pleasantly spent, with Mr. Pope, Mr. Parnelle, Dean Swift, the Doctor, etc. I should be glad the world knew You admitted me to your friendship, and since your affection is too

was written in a letter to *Swift*, 1719. And the words must have been mortifying to Swift, who thought highly of Lord Oxford's abilities.

hard for your Judgment, I am contented to let the world know how well Mr. Pope can write upon a barren subject. I return you an exact copy of the verses, that I may keep the Original, as a testimony of the only error you have been guilty of. I hope very speedily to embrace you in London, and to assure you of the particular esteem and friendship wherewith I am

Your, etc.

LETTER XIX.

TO MR. HOLDSWORTH[1].

Sir, Twitenham, Dec. 1737.

As I am not so happy (though I have long desired it) to be known to you otherwise than in my poetical capacity, so you will see, it is in the merit of that only that I take the liberty of applying to you, in what I think the cause of poetry. I understand that the Poetry-Professorship in Oxford will be vacant, and that Mr. Harte, of St. Mary Hill, is willing to succeed in it. I think it a condescension in one who practises the art of poetry so well, to stoop to be a critick, and hope the University will do itself the credit to accept of him. Your interest is what I would beg for him as a favour to myself. You, who have used the Muses so ill as to cast them off when they

[1] Author of Muscipule.

were so kind to you, ought some way to atone, by promoting such good and faithful servants to them in your stead. But if Mr. Harte were not as virtuous and as blameless, as he is capable and learned, I should recommend him with an ill grace to one whose morals only have hindered his fortune, and whose modesty only prevented his fame. If ever you visit these seats of corruption in and about London, I hope you would favour me with a day or two's retirement hither, where I might try to show you, with what regard I truly am, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XX.

MR. POPE TO MR. HUGHES.

SIR, April, 19, 1714.

I MAKE use of the freedom you so obligingly allowed me, of sending you a paper of proposals for "Homer," and of intreating your assistance in promoting the subscriptions. I have added another for Mr. Pate, if he thinks fit to oblige me so far, as you seemed inclined to believe he might.

I have left receipts signed with Mr. Jervas, who will give them for any subscriptions you may procure, and be (I am sure) very glad to be better acquainted with you, or entertain you with what paintings or drawings he has. He charges me to give you his

most humble service; and I beg you to think no man is, with a truer esteem than I, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

Pray make my most humble service acceptable to Sir Richard Blackmore[2].

LETTER XXI.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Binfield, Oct. 7, 1715.

EVER since I had the pleasure to know you, I have believed you one of that uncommon rank of authors, who are undesigning men and sincere friends; and who, when they commend another, have not any view of being praised themselves. I should be therefore ashamed to offer at saying any of those civil things in return to your obliging compliments in regard to my translations of "Homer," only I have too great a value for you, not to be pleased with them; and

[2] It appears from the above, that Mr. Pope and this poetical Knight were then upon terms of friendship, which were first broken by Sir Richard's accusing Mr. Pope of profaneness and immorality, (see his "Essays," vol. ii. p. 27.) on a report from Curl that he was author of a "Travestie on the first Psalm." Had it not been for this, all the Knight's bad poetry would scarcely have procured him a place in the "Dunciad," as in that poem the author "professed to attack no man living who had not before printed or published against him;" and, on this principle, having ridiculed "Dr. Watts's Psalms," in the first edition of that satire, those lines were, at the instance of Mr. Richardson, the painter, a friend to both, in all the subsequent editions, omitted.

yet, I assure you, I receive praises from you with less pleasure than I have often paid them to your merit before, and shall (I doubt not) have frequent occasions of doing again, from those useful pieces you are still obliging us with. If you was pleased with my preface, you have paid me for that pleasure, in the same kind, by your entertaining and judicious essays[3] on Spencer. The present you make me is of the most agreeable nature imaginable, for Spencer has been ever a favorite poet to me: he is like a mistress, whose faults we see, but love her with them all.

What has deferred my thanks till now, was a ramble I have been taking about the country, from which I returned home and found your kind letter but yesterday. A testimony of that kind, from a man of your turn, is to be valued at a better rate than the ordinary estimate of letters will amount to. I shall rejoice in all opportunities of cultivating a friendship I so truly esteem, and hope very shortly to tell you in town, how much I am, Sir,

Your, etc.

Since you desire to hear of my progress in the translation, I must tell you that I have gone through four more books, which (with the remarks) will make the second volume.

[3] "An Essay on Allegorical Poetry," "Remarks on the Fairy Queen," "On the Shepherd's Calendar," &c. prefixed to Mr. Hughes's edition of Spenser's Works, 1715.

LETTER XXII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Twickenham, Jan. 22, 1719-20.

YOUR letter found me, as I have long been, in a state of health almost as bad as that you complain of; and indeed what makes me utterly incapable of attending to any poetical task, even that of Homer. This minute too I can scarce return you the civility of an answer, being in the full operation of a vomit I have taken. I can only say, with sincerity, I am heartily concerned for your illness, and the more uneasy with my own, in that it hinders me from serving you. I truly wish you health and life, to enjoy that reputation and those advantages which so much ingenuity, joined with so much virtue, deserves. As soon as I am able to be in town I will wait on you with the play, in which, and in every thing else, I wish you all success. I am, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIII.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR,

I RETURN you the play sooner than I am willing to part with what I like so extremely well, because you press it. Upon my word, I think it every way

worthy of you, and make not the least doubt but the world will do you the justice you deserve in the acceptation of it: I continue very much out of order, but must be forced to be in town (well or ill) some days this week, upon indispensable affairs; when I will wait upon you and tell you my sincere thoughts, none of which is more sincere than that I am truly,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIV.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR SIR, Twickenham, Feb. 18[4], 1719-20.

I HAVE been much concerned not to have waited upon you as I designed, since you obliged me with your play. I am since much more troubled to hear of the continuance of your illness. Would to God you might live as long, as I am sure, the reputation of your tragedy must! I am a fellow-sufferer with you, in not being able to see it played, having been, and still being, too much indisposed to go to any public place. But I could be extremely glad some particular friends of mine had that pleasure I cannot enjoy: you would highly favour me in letting three or four ladies have a side-box, who have sent into the country to me, upon information that the boxes are disposed of by you. I am sorry to give you this

[4] Mr. Hughes died the night before this letter was written, aged 42.

trouble, when perhaps, for your health's sake, you should not have a moment's disturbance, and I could not send sooner at this distance.

Pray think I wish you all the success you deserve, and all the health you want. I am, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXV.

MR. POPE TO MR. JABEZ HUGHES[5].

SIR, February 26, 1719-20.

I CANNOT omit the acknowledgment I really think I owe your great civility, especially at so melancholy and affecting a moment, as that of your worthy brother's death must have been to you. Indeed, even his common acquaintance must have known enough of him to regret his loss; and I most heartily condole with you upon it. I believe I am further obliged to you for his play; which I received yesterday, and read

[5] Younger brother of Mr. John Hughes, and like him, a votary of the Muses, and an excellent scholar. He published, in 1714, a translation of "The Rape of Proserpine," from Claudian; and the Story of Sextus and Erictho, from Lucan's Pharsalia, b. vi. in 8vo. These translations, with notes, were reprinted in 12mo. in 1723. He also published, in 1717, a translation of Suetonius's "Lives of the twelve Cæsars," and translated several Novels "from the Spanish of Cervantes," which are inserted in "The select Collection of Novels and Histories," printed for Watts, 1729. He died January 17, 1731, in the 46th year of his age: a volume of his Miscellanies, in prose and verse, was published in 1737. His widow accompanied the Lady of Governor Byng to Madras, and died there.

over again with more concern and sorrow than I ever felt at reading any tragedy. The real loss of a good man may be called a distress to the world, and ought to affect us more than any feigned or ancient distress, how finely drawn soever. I am glad of an occasion to give you, under my hand, this testimony, both how excellent I think this work to be, and how excellent I thought the author. I am, with my hearty thanks to you, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXVI.

MR. POPE TO MR. DUNCOMBE.

SIR, Twickenham, Oct. 20, 1734.

I AM obliged for the favour of yours. I have looked for the letter Mr. Hughes sent me, but cannot find it. I had a great regard for his merit, modesty, and softness of manners. He writ to me a few days before his death, concerning his play of the "Siege of Damascus," which is the only letter I can meet with.

I thank you for the part you are pleased to take, both in regard to my health (which has, I thank God, been as good as usual) and to my reputation, my poetical welfare, which I resign as much to Providence as the other. But truly I had not the least thought of stealing applause, by suppressing my name to that essay: I wanted only to hear truth, and was more afraid of my partial friends than enemies. Besides, I

really was humble and diffident enough to distrust my own performance. All I can say of it is, that I know is to be an honest one. I am, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXVII.

TO THE SAME.

SIR, Twickenham, May 6, 1735.

MANY thanks for your kind present, in which I find several pleasing and very correct pieces of his, (Mr. Hughes's,) which were new to me. I beg you to accept of the new volume of my things just printed, which will be delivered you by Mr. Dodsley, the author of the *Toy-shop*, who has just set up (as) a bookseller; and I doubt not, as he has more sense, so will have more honesty, than most of his profession. I am, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO THE SAME.

SIR, Twitenham, Nov. 5, 1734.

I AM extremely willing to bear any testimony of my real regard for Mr. Hughes, and therefore what you mention of my letter to his brother, after his

death, will be a greater instance of the sincerity with which it was given: it is perfectly at your service. I thank you for the tenderness with which you deal in this matter toward me, and I esteem you for that which you show to the memory of your kinsman. I doubt not but you will discharge it in a becoming manner, and am, Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE SAME.

SIR, Saturday, Nov. 23, 1734.

MY absence from home prevented my receiving your two letters this day. I would else have read your tragedy willingly; and I beg you not to take amiss that I return your presents of the tickets, since it is not in my power to be there next week, through indispensable obligations in the country at some distance. I think your prologue[6] a good one; and I think of players as I always thought of players, and of the son as I thought of the father. I sincerely wish you success, and am, Sir,

Your, etc.

[6] This prologue (which was afterward spoken by Mr. Milward with applause) had been just returned to the author, with great contempt, by Mr. Theophilus Cibber.

LETTER XXX.

TO MR. PITT,

TRANSLATOR OF VIDA AND VIRGIL.

Twitenham, near Hampton-Court,
July 23, 1726.

SIR,

I RECEIVED a letter from you with satisfaction having long been desirous of any occasion of testifying my regard for you, and particularly of acknowledging the pleasure your Version of Vida's Poetick had afforded me. I had it not indeed from your bookseller, but read it with eagerness, and think it both a correct and a spirited translation. I am pleased to have been (as you tell me) the occasion of your undertaking that work: that is some sort of merit; and, if I have any in me, it really consists in an earnest desire to promote and produce, as far as I can, that of others. But as to my being the publisher, or any way concerned in reviewing or recommending of Lintot's Miscellany, it is what I never did in my life, though he (like the rest of his tribe) makes a very free use of my name. He has often reprinted my things, and so scurvily, that, finding he was doing so again, I corrected the sheets as far as they went, of my own only. And, being told by him that he had two or three copies of yours, (which you also had formerly sent me (as he said) through his hands), I obliged him to write for your consent, before he made use of them. This was all: your second book he has just now delivered to me, the in-

scription of which to myself I will take care he shall leave out; and either return the rest of your verses to him or not, as you shall like best.

I am obliged to you, Sir, for expressing a much higher opinion of me than I know I deserve: the freedom with which you write is yet what obliges and pleases me more; and it is with sincerity that I say, I would rather be thought by every ingenious man in the world, his servant, than his rival.

I am, etc.

LETTER XXXI.

TO THE REV. MR. PITT,

RECTOR OF PIMPERNE, NEAR BLANDFORD, DORSETSHIRE.

Twitenham, Aug. 2, 1728.

I AM here, my dear Rector, in as delightful a situation for the world about me, and books, and conversation, as mortal man can wish to be. I can think of nothing at present that could add to it, except the hearing that you are very well, and entirely free from your old enemy the gout. I should not know how to leave this place, had not I the hopes of waiting upon you in a few weeks; but first I can assure you, I have a world of drudgery to go through. I had almost forgot one particular: when I was with our old friend, Mr. Pescod, the other day, he confirmed me in a thought I had, that the verses on an Old Beauty (she, you know, " who blooms in the

winter of her days like Glastenbury Thorn") were written by you at New College. If they are yours, as I am very much persuaded they are, I beg you would be so good as to send me a copy of them in your answer; which I beg may be as soon as possible, because, as you may easily imagine, I don't love to be many days without hearing from you. I desire this copy the rather, because I have been asked for it since I have been in town, and have none but a very incorrect copy at present. If you have any commands here, I beg you would favour me with them, as your most affectionate friend and servant,

Jo. SPENCE.

SIR,

I take this opportunity of assuring you, you have, at the place from whence this letter is dated, a friend and servant,

A. POPE.

N. B. In a letter from Mr. Spence to Mr. Pitt, dated New College, November 12, 1728, are the folowing words, containing Mr. Pope's opinion of *Pitt's Virgil.*

" Before this I gave you Mr. Pope's real sentiment on your first book; I dare say it was his real sentiment, because, as I told you, I took care to ask him the question before I had mentioned my being acquainted with you; and it was literally what I told you."

LETTER XXXII.

MR. POPE'S OPINION OF BATH.

TO MR. RICHARDSON, QUEEN'S SQUARE.

DEAR SIR, November 21.

EVERY thing was welcome to me in your kind letter, except the occasion of it, the confinement you are under. I am glad you count the days when I do not see you: but it was but half an one that I was in town upon business with Dr. Mead, and returned to render an account of it.

I shall in the course of the winter probably be an evening visitant to you, if you sit at home, though I hope it will not be by compulsion or lameness. We may take a cup of sack together, and chatter like two parrots, which are at least more reputable and manlike animals than the grasshoppers, to which Homer likens old men.

I am glad you sleep better. I sleep in company, and wake at night, which is vexatious: if you did so, you, at your age, would make verses. As to my health, it will never mend; but I will complain less of it, when I find it incorrigible.

But for the news of my quitting Twitnam for Bath, enquire into my years, if they are past the bounds of dotage? Ask my eyes, if they can see, and my nostrils if they can smell? to prefer rocks and dirt to flowery meads and silver Thames, and brimstone and frogs to roses and sun-shine. When I arrive at these sensations, I may settle at Bath, of which I

never yet dreamt, further than to live out of the sulphurous pit, and at the edge of the frogs at Mr. Allen's, for a month or so. I like the place so little, that health itself should not draw me thither, though friendship has twice or thrice.

Having answered your questions, I desire to hear if you have any commands; if the first be to come to you, it is probable I shall before you can send them so round about as to Twitnam, for I have lived of late at Battersea. Adieu!

Your, etc.

LETTER XXXIII.

MR. LYTTLETON TO LORD BOLINGBROKE.

My Lord, Argyle-street, April 14, 1746.

I am prevented by unavoidable business from waiting on you this morning, as I intended to do, in order to talk with your Lordship upon the subject about which you sent Mr. Mallet to me, which I have thought much upon since, and with no little uneasiness. Any public mark of your Lordship's esteem and partiality for me, as it would be the highest honour, so would it be the greatest pleasure to me. But as I now live in the most intimate connections of friendship with many of the best and nearest friends of the late Lord Oxford, and have even received obligations from some of his family, who would be extremely offended at a work which so severely reflects on his memory, being now published

and addressed to me; it is an honour, which, however flattering and agreeable it would be to me in other respects, I am, on that account, compelled to decline. I must therefore, though with the utmost reluctance, beg of your Lordship, if you resolve to publish it now, that you would leave out the part which relates to me. But I should much rather wish, and, if I might presume to judge for your Lordship, should think it more eligible for yourself, to defer the publication of it to a more proper time. That a very disagreeable use will be made of it, I am sure; and there is a great difference as to the consequences and effects of it in the world, between an imperfect copy of it stolen into print in a magazine, and the avowed and authorized publication, which will draw the attention of mankind.

But in this point your Lordship must think for yourself. I only entreat you to forgive the necessity which I am under of declining, in my situation, what in any other I should most ardently wish; and to believe me in all situations, with the most perfect respect and most grateful sense of your favours to me, my Lord,

Your, etc.

P. S. I hope in a day or two to wait on your Lordship.

LETTER XXXIV.

LORD BOLINGBROKE TO MR. LYTTLETON.

DEAR SIR, Battersea, April 15, 1749.

I WOULD not answer your letter that came yesterday to my hands, till I could tell you, as I now can do, that every word will be left out of the papers which have given you so much uneasiness; and out of the introduction to them, that may even seem to have been addressed to you. I have had my uneasiness too, that of being forced to reveal the turpitude of a man with whom I lived long in the intimacy of friendship, and that of being obliged by your commands to suppress any marks of my esteem and affection for you. I have obeyed you, and it was reasonable I should: but I cannot take your advice, nor think it eligible for me to defer the publication of these papers to a more proper time: they should not have been made public at all, if I could have helped it. But since they must be made so, what time can be more proper for me to publish them than the present? I must either suffer them to be sent abroad uncorrected, in such a manner as I would not have published them myself, and with every thing in them which you are so desirous to have left out; or I must do what I am doing, let them appear corrected and less unfit for the public eye. If any use disagreeable to others be made of this forced publication, I shall be sorry for it. As to its consequences and effects relative to myself, I am under no concern: for though

age and infirmities press me hard, and I stand almost alone in the world, yet I find vigour enough remaining to defend myself against any attack, with truth, reason, and the cause of this country on my side. Thus I think for myself, and, I hope, not unreasonably.

As to you, I shall continue to think as I have always thought, with true esteem and a sincere affection, in whatever situation you are; and shall profess myself as long as I live, dear Sir,

Your, etc.

LETTER XXXV.

LORD BOLINGBROKE TO MR. MALLET.

DEAR SIR, Battersea, July 25, 1747.

SINCE I sent to enquire after your health, and that of Mrs. Mallet, (of both which I hope to have a good account,) I cannot help mentioning to you, what I hear from many different quarters. They say that Warburton talks very indecently of your humble servant, and threatens him with the terrible things he shall throw out in a Life he is writing of our friend Pope. I value neither the good nor the ill-will of the man; but if he has any regard for the man he flattered living, and thinks himself obliged to flatter dead, he ought to let a certain proceeding die away in silence, as I endeavour it should. Whenever you have a day of leisure you will be extremely welcome to

Your, &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

[Among Dr. Birch's papers in the British Museum, is the following Letter of Bishop Warburton, on Mallet's publishing the Works of Bolingbroke. It is addressed to Mr. Andrew Millar, the bookseller. Together with some Fragments relating to a former quarrel betwixt the Bishop and Mallet.]

SIR, Gloucester, March 20, 1757.

I FIND by the newspapers, accusations to stir up the public resentment against the Editor of Lord Bolingbroke's Works. This I think ridiculous and unfair; he is not accountable to any particulars in what concerns his own conscience only: and it is perfectly ridiculous to suppose that Lord Bolingbroke left him the property of his writings with design they should be suppressed. The very contrary purpose is evident to the common sense of mankind. But there is a contradiction between this and the declaration in the prefatory letter to Mr. Pope. Why? His whole book is full of contradictions, as well as weak reasonings, and pernicious principles. I perhaps may have occasion, in due time, to shew all this. But what is this to the Editor? Let the Author answer for it; and he will have a hundred writers, I make no doubt, to call him to account. But if the Editor grows jealous (as he did in the case of the Patriot King) of one who neither thought nor said a word of him, but addressed all he had to say to Lord Bolingbroke, and yet was villanously abused by somebody or other on that account, he will find himself business. The worst I wish him is the best his friends can wish; that if

he hath not published these Works with a perfectly satisfied conscience, he may make his peace, not with particulars or the public, which are nothing, but with him only who can heal a wounded conscience, or enlighten an erroneous one.

FRAGMENT.

"With regard to Mr. Mallet's declaration, there is only one way to convince me, he is not the Author of that infamous libel, which is, by taking an opportunity of disowning it publicly. I think my honour is concerned, that it be publicly known I had no hand in the letter to Lord Bolingbroke, merely on account of the Apollo story, and I shall do it on the first occasion. If Mr. Mallet does not do the same with regard to this libel, I shall consider him as the Author of it, and act in consequence of that belief. This I desire you would let Millar know, and if he chooses, let him have a transcript of what I here say."

END OF THE SEVENTH VOLUME.

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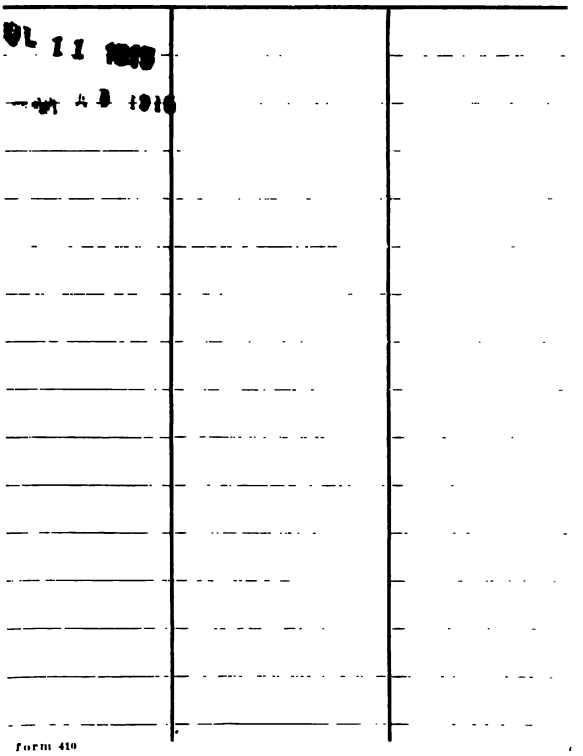
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